

1591  
*Cornelius Winter*  
*The Nullity of the Romish Faith;*  
*N<sup>o</sup> 36* OR

# A BLOW

At the Root of the  
**Romish Church,**

B E I N G

An Examination of that Funda-  
mental Doctrine of the CHURCH  
of *ROME* concerning the Churches IN-  
FALLIBILITY, and of all those several Me-  
thods which their most famous and approved Wri-  
ters have used for the defence thereof.

T O G E T H E R W I T H

An APPENDIX tending to the Demon-  
stration of the Solidity of the PROTESTANT  
FAITH, wherein the Reader will find all the Material Objections  
and Cavils of their most considerable Writers, viz. *Richworth*  
(alias *Rushworth*) in his Dialogues, *White* in his Treatise *de fide* and  
his *Apology for Tradition*, *Cressy* in his *Exomologesis*, *S. Clara* in his  
*Systema fidei*, and Captain *Everard* in his late account of his pre-  
tended Conversion to the Church of *Rome* discussed and answered.

By MATTHEW POOLE Minister of the Gospel.

L O N D O N,

Printed for and Sold by *Rob. Boulter* at the *Turks*  
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the *Exchange*, *Cornhil*, 1 6 7 9.

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James B. Wilson

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APPENDIX, relating to the Decem-

THE PROTESTANT

1. The first of these is the fact that the system is not a simple one, but a complex one, involving many different factors, and the results of the system are not always predictable.

1. The first of these is the fact that the account of the events is given in a very brief and concise manner, and that the details are not given in a very full and complete manner.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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*To the Right Honourable ARTHUR  
Earl of DONEGAL Lord Vis-  
count Chichester, of Carickfergus,  
Baron of Belfast, one of his MA-  
JESTIES most Honourable Privy  
Concellours for his Kingdom of  
Ireland.*

*My LORD,*



How much it concerns every man to be right-ly informed in the Controversies between *Rome* and Us, is sufficiently evident from the great importance they have in reference to our everlasting state. The Papists think the Protestant Doctrine is dangerous to Salvation, and the Protestants know the Popish Doctrine to be so: For although they use confidently to give it out to their Partisans, that their Religion is a safe way in the judgment of Protestants themselves, and though in former times of ignorance God might wink at some members of the Church of *Rome* that held the foundation, although they built a great deal of Hay and Stubble upon it: Yet since the late Edition of several new Articles of their Creed, and the contempt of that clear and glorious light of Gospel discoveries shining in the discourses and Writings of Protestant Authors, I cannot (and I fear God will not) excuse them from that hainous crime of rebelling against the light or withholding

### *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

it in unrighteousness and, as Christ said to the Jewes, they have now no cloak for their Sins.

What the portion is of the followers of Antichrist we may more safely understand from the Testimony of God than from the conjectures of men: of them we read that *they shall be damned*, 2 Thes. 2. 12. That *their names are not written in the book of Life*, Rev. 13. 8. That *they shall drink of the Wine of the Wrath of God*,--and *shall be tormented with Fire and Brimstone*,--and *the smock of their Torment shall ascend evermore*, and *they shall have no rest day nor night which worship the Beast and his Image*. Rev. 14. 9, 10. 11.

The only doubt is, whether the Papists be followers of Antichrist, or (which comes to one) whether the Pope be Antichrist; which seemed so probable to the famous Lord Bacon, that being asked by King JAMES whether he thought him so to be, it was no less truly than wittily answered by Him, That if an hue and cry should come after Antichrist, which should describe him by those Characters by which he is decyphered in the Bible, he should certainly apprehend the Pope for him. And I desire all Papists, who would not venture their Eternal Salvation upon uncertainties, to do our Cause and their own Souls that justice, as to peruse the Authors of both sides, viz. *Whitaker* and *Downham* on the one, and *Bellarmino* and *Lessius* on the other, and then I doubt not but they will conclude the notorious weakness of their Cavils or pretended Answers to our Allegations, to be at least an high presumption of the truth of our Assertion, if not sufficient to put an end to all further doubtings.

*My Lord,*

It is no small evidence of a good cause, and felicity of our Protestant people, that they are permitted to see with their own Eyes, and are both allowed and warned by their Teachers, not to take matters of Salvation upon trust, but to enquire and search the Scripture and other Authors

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

Authors, whether those things be true or no, whilst unhappy Papists like the *Andabata* of old, must wink and fight, and are obliged with an implicit Faith to follow their guides in spite of Christs caution used upon the like occasion, *If the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the Ditch*, Matth. 15. 14. Protestant Ministers bespeak their hearers in St. Pauls language, *I speak to wise men judge ye what I say*, 1. Cor. 10. 15. While Popish Priests, if they would speak out, must say, *I speak as to fools, believe all that I say*: A plain sign their Gold is adulterate because they dare not suffer it to come to the Touchstone.

*My Lord,*

In the handling of these Controversies I thought it most prudent and ingenious to follow the Counsel which *Benhadad* gave to his Soldiers, to fight neither with small nor great; but with the King of *Israel*, and therefore I did not mind the branches, but have indeavoured to strike at the Root: For such is the Doctrine here discussed, *viz.* the Doctrine of the Churches Authority and Infallibility, and so it is acknowledged by all the Romanists, and we are advised by them (if we mean to do any good) to attaque them in this point. I like the Counsel, and therefore have resolved *οὐ θεῶν ἀρχὰς πητὲρ*, to attempt their strongest Hold. All the Controversies of the Church of *Rome* have (what *Caligula* wished all the people of *Rome* had) one Neck, and that is this of the Churches infallible Authority: while this is safe, we do but pair their Nails, and cut their Hair, which will quickly grow again; but if this fails all falls, wound them here, and it goes to their Heart. Whether I have done this here or no, I shall not be so absurd or arrogant as to give judgement in my own cause, this only I shall be bold to say, that I have faithfully represented the strength of the Popish cause in this great point cut of their most famous and approved Authors,

### *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

and such of whom it may be truly said, *Si mania Roma Defendi possent dextrâ hac defensa fuissent*, and therefore if all the plausible pretences of their most considerable Writers be here removed & destroyed, (which I willingly refer to the Judgment of the serious intelligent and impartial Reader) I may without injustice conclude, that their Doctrine is indefensible, and their cause desperate.

*My Lord.*

The reason why I devolve the Patronage of this Work upon your Lordship is not only the consideration of your real worth, and those honourable qualities resplendent in you, the true generosity, sincere friendship, obliging sweetness, impartial valuation of persons according to their merit, not their party or opinion in little things, and other conspicuous virtues (which they that have the happiness of your acquaintance are witnesses of,) nor is it only the known excellency and exemplary piety of your most Illustrious Lady (which nothing but ignorance or malice can deny,) nor the particular obligations which I shall always desire to own to both of you, but the contemplation of that great interest, which by the high capacity of your place, and the nobleness of your Estate, and the unexampled affability of your deportment, you have in the Kingdom of *Ireland*; which how free it is from other Venoms your Lordship knows better than I, yet sure I am it is sadly infected with the Poyson of Popish Doctrines, and therefore I thought the Antidote most needful there, and that your Lordships Authority and Influence accompanied with your zealous endeavours (which God expects, and I promise to my self from you in so good a cause) might induce many persons of the Rominish perswasion to read and consider this short Treatise: *if God per adventure may give them Repentance to the acknowledgment of the Truth that they may recover themselves from the snare of the Devil.*

That

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

That God would incline your heart to contribute your most effectual help to so good a work, and succeed you in it, and recompence you for it, and that God would bless your self and worthy Lady with all the blessings you want, & mercifully preserve and sanctifie to you all you have, and crown all with those inexpressible felicities of another World, is now and shall, by Gods assistance be the humble and fervent prayer of,

Sept. 1. 1663.

My Lord,

*Your Lordships Orator at the  
Throne of Grace*

MATTHEW POOLE,

## To the Reader.

**B**Efore I come to the work it self, I know my Reader will require satisfaction in two things, which I hold my self obliged to give, in the first to the Protestant, in the latter to the Romanist. 1. It will be objected to me as the Jewish Tradition tells us was objected to Moses by his Antagonists, who charged him with bringing magical Operations among them, that he brought Straw into Egypt, a Country abounding with Corn: so it will be said that I trouble the World with needless Repetitions, that I write an Iliad after Homer, and do that work which hath long since been done much better by our Protestant Heroes, and that Nil dictum est quod non est dictum prius: and particularly that this point of Infallibility hath been discussed by that formidable Adversary of Rome the most acute Mr. Chillingworth, Lord Falkland, Dr. Hammond, and lately by our Learned Mr. Stillingfleet. To these my Apology is, 1. That the clamorous importunity of Popish Writers doth force us to the Repetitions, it being the Practice of most of their present Controvertists boldly to urge those things in English as unanswerable, which they know have been so solidly disproved in Latine, that they neither can nor have pretended to answer. 2. I have made it my endeavour as much as I could to avoid Repetitions, which are as displeasing to me as they can be to the Reader which if I have in many places stumbled upon, it hath rather been the Necessity of the Thing, or an unhappy Chance, than Choice and Design. 3. The Reader I hope will find

## To the Reader.

find ΚΙΟΝ & ΚΑΙΝΑΣ. If I had known of any Author, who had in so short a compass and plain Method contracted and dissolved the strength of the Popish cause in this great point, I had willingly superseded; nor did I intrude myself into this work, but was invited to it by diverse worthy and learned friends, and afterwards encouraged in it by the approbation of such persons, whose judgments I think almost all the learned part of England doth reverence. 4. Here is a new plea, viz. concerning the sufficiency of the testimony of the present Church and the Infallibility of Oral Tradition (not at all considered by Mr. Chillingworth, nor fully discussed by any other that I know of, (except the ingenious Lord Falkland, who handles it quite another way, and hath left room for some Gleanings after his harvest.) Nor is it debated by Mr. Stillingfleet, whose Adversaries led him to things of another nature. And besides it is known to diverse, that this Treatise was prepared for the press before Mr. Stillingfleet's excellent Discourse came out, though retarded by some unhappy occurrences which it is needless here to recount.

The second particular is this: The Papists will pretend, that the Doctrines I charge upon them, and the Testimonies which I alledge against them, are only the particular opinions of private Doctors, and not of their whole Church. My defence is this.

1. The Authors which are here introduced, are not pedantick Writers, but such as are of prime note and highest esteem in the Church of Rome, and the most zealous & considerable Champions of their Cause, and such (for the generality of them) whose writings came forth with the Character of their Churches approbation upon them, concerning whom it will be very difficult to perswade any intelligent man, either that such persons did not understand the sense of the Church of Rome (as well as the Objector) or that they did knowingly contradict the doctrine of their Church, or would be permitted so to do without any censure upon them.

## To the Reader.

2. The Testimonies of those Authors are undoubtedly sufficient for that end for which I alledge them, which is to shew the falseness of those doctrines, and the weakness of those arguments which are disbelieved and disproved by their own learnedest and stoutest Champions, by which it may appear to all impartial persons, that it is not the ignorance nor prejudice of Protestants, ( as some of their Writers have the Effrontery to assert ) which make them reject the Popish Tenets, but meerly the want of Truth and evidence therein, confessed ( as you will see all along in the following Treatise ) by their own Brethren, and that it is a desperate madness in any Papist to hazard his everlasting concerns upon such principles, as so many of their acutest Scholars do publickly disavow : And that this is really the case of the unhappy Romanist, I refer thee to the subsequent Discourse.

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# The Nullity of the Romish Faith.

## The Introduction.

**A**ll Papists profess to resolve their Faith into, and to ground it upon the Churches infallible Testimony and supreme Authority: But when they come to explicate what they mean by the Church, and on what account they ground their faith upon her, then they fall into diverse opinions. By the Church some understand the Ancient Church, whose testimony is expressed in the Writings of the Fathers; others, the present Church, whose living Testimony and Authority they say is sufficient without any further enquiry. And this present Church too they cannot yet agree what it is: some say the Pope, others a general Council, and others the Pope and a Council together. Nor are they less at variance about the grounds on which they build the Churches Authority. This some lay in the Testimony of Scripture, others in the Authority of the Fathers, others in universal oral Tradition, others in the motives of Credibility (as we shall see in the process of this discourse.) My purpose is to discover the rottenness of these several foundations as they make use of them, and to shew that they have no solid foundation for their Faith in any of these recited particulars: and for more orderly proceeding I shall lay down six Propositions.

1 That a Papists faith hath no solid foundation in the authority and infallibility of the Pope. 2. Nor in the Scriptures according to their principles. 3 Nor in the Authority

rity of Fathers. 4. Nor in the infallibility of the Church and Councils. 5. Nor in unwritten Tradition, and the authority of the present Church. 6. Nor in the motive of Credibility. Of which in order.

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## CHAP: I.

### *Of the Popes Authority and Infallibility.*

Se<sup>t</sup>. 1. **T**He Popes infallible authority is in it self of no Propos. 1. validity, and is a meer nullity further than it is established or corroborated by the rest. This needs no great proof. For if I should ask any Papist why he rather relies upon the decisions of the Bishop of *Rome*, than the Bishop of *York*; the only plea is, that the Bishop of *Rome* is *St. Peters* successor, & established by God in those royalties and jurisdictions, which *St. Peter* is supposed to have been invested with. But if I ask how this appears, what proofs and evidences are there of this assertion (upon which hangs the whole Mass and-Fabrick of Popery?) there is no man so grossly absurd, to believe himself, or to affirm that I am bound to believe this barely upon the Popes assertion, that he is *Peters* successor. But for the proof of this, I am by the learned Romanist referred unto some passages of Scripture: as, *Thou art Peter. Feed my sheep*, &c. unto Tradition, and the Testimony of Fathers, and acts of Councils, that have either devolved this power upon, or acknowledged and confirmed it in the Bishops of *Rome*: from whence it undeniably follows, that the Popes ἀντὶς ἔειπεν, or naked affirmation of his own Authority (though delivered *ex Cathedra*, and with all imaginable formalities) is of no weight in it self, and hath no strength, nor virtue in it further than it is supported & demonstrated from such Testimonies of Scriptures

tures, Fathers, or Councils. Which will further appear from this consideration: That upon supposition, that the Scripture had been silent as to *Peters* supremacy, and the Fathers and Councils had said nothing concerning the succession of the Bishops of *Rome* in *St. Peters* chair, but had ascribed the same privileges, which they are pretended to attribute to the Pope, to the Bishop of *Antioch*, I say upon this supposition, the Popes pretences would have been adjudged extremely presumptuous, and wholly ridiculous. From this then we have gained thus much, That the Popes Authority and Infallibility being the thing in question, and but a superstruction upon those other forementioned foundations, and not *αὐτομίσθον*, or credible for it self, that it is not in it self a sufficient foundation for a Papists faith. And so that must be quitted as impertinent to the present enquiry, and we must go to the other particulars, and examine whether a Papist without any reference to, or dependance upon the Popes Authority or Infallibility, can find a solid foundation for his faith either in Scriptures, Fathers, Councils, Tradition, or the motives of Credibility: And if I can shew, that the Papists, according to their own principles, cannot have a solid and sure ground for their faith in any of the now mentioned particulars, or if I can shew, that all their other pretensions, according to the principles of the most and learnedst Papists, depend upon this Authority of the Pope, and without it are no solid foundation of faith, that Scriptures, Fathers, Councils, and Tradition, are not conclusive nor obliging to me to believe, without the Popes Authority and Interpretation, (which I think will be made evident in the following discourses) then I may truly conclude, that they have no foundation for their faith. Therefore I pass on to the second head.

## C H A P. II.

*Of the Authority of Scripture according to Romish Principles.*

Pro. 2. **T**Hat the Scripture in it self, without the Interpretation, Testimony, and Authority of the Church, is not a sufficient foundation of Faith for private Christians, according to the Doctrine of the Romanists. This is so plain, so often asserted by them, so universally owned, so vehemently urged in all their Treatises, that if there were not an horrible perverseness and tergiversation in that sort of men ( who indeed by the badness of their cause are forced to say and unsay, give and recall, affirm and deny the same things as occasion requires, and the strength of an Argument forceth them : ) I might supersede from any further pain or trouble therein. I shall therefore only observe two principles of the Popish Creed, either of which ( and much more both put together ) do plainly and undeniably evince, that according to their Hypotheses the Scripture in it self is no solid ground nor foundation of a Christians faith. 1. That a Christian cannot know, and is not bound to believe any, or all of the Books of Scripture to be the Word of God, without the Churches Witness and Authority. 2. That the sense of Scriptures is so obscure and ambiguous in the Articles of Faith, that a Christian cannot discover it without the Churches interpretation.

§. 2. For the first of these, it may suffice at present to mention two or three passages out of their approved Writers. Baily the Jesuite, in his Catechism of Controversies made by the command of the Archbishop of  
Burdcaux

Burdeaux, puts this Question : ( a ) To whom doth it belong to determine of Canonical Books ? and answers thus. To the Church, without whose Authority I should no more believe St. Matthew than Titus Livius. When Brentius alleged the saying of a Papist; That if the Scriptures were destitute of the Churches Authority, they would weigh no more than *Æsops* Fables; the Cardinal *Hosius* replies, ( b ) That these words may be taken in a pious sense; for in truth ( saith he ) unless the Authority of the Church did teach us that this Scripture were Canonical, it would have very little weight with us. So Charron plainly tells us, ( c ) That the Scripture hath no Authority, no weight or force towards us, and our faith, but for the Churches assertion and declaration. Andradinus in expresse terms denies ( d ) that there is any thing of Divinity in the Scripture, which binds us to believe the things therein contained, but the Church, which teacheth us, that those Books are Sacred, none can resist without the highest impiety. One may well cry out—*Heu pietas, heu prisca fides!* To disbelieve the Scripture, that is no impiety, but to resist the Church, that is the highest impiety: To make God a lyar, that is no impiety, but to make the Church a lyar that is impiety in the highest. You see now the reason why Violations of the Churches Authority are more severely punished

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( a ) Doctor Jesuita *Ad quem pertinet de libris Canonicis determinare?* Catholicus Papista. *Ad Ecclesiam, sine cujus auctoritate, non plus fidei adhibeam Matthæo quam Tito Livio.* par. 1. q. 12. ( b ) Potuit illud pio sensu dici—*Nam revera nisi nos Ecclesie doceret auctoritas hanc Scripturam esse Canonicam, perexiguum apud nos pondus haberet.* De auctoritate Scripture contra Brentium. lib. 3. fol. 271. ( c ) Scriptura nullam habet auctoritatem, nullum pondus, nullam vim erga nos & nostram fidem, nisi quod Ecclesia dicit & declarat. Charron vers. 3.

( d ) Neque in Scripturis quicquam inesse divinitatis, quæ nos ad credendum, quæ illis continentur, religioni aliqua constringat, at Ecclesie, quæ codices illos sacros esse docet—*nemo sine gravissima impietatis nota possit repugnare.* Defens. Trident. lib. 2.

at Rome, then the grossest transgressions of Gods laws; because there is more impiety in them, and so more severity should be exercised against them. And *Pighius* useth no less freedome, telling us, (a) *That the Scriptures have no Authority with us either from themselves, or from their Authors, but meerly from the Churches Testimony.* Thus you see, according to the systeme of Popish Theology, the Scripture doth not discover it self to be the Word of God, nor oblige my faith, unless it bring along with it the Churches Letters of Credence. And whereas in *St. Paul's* dayes, neither Church nor Apostle was beleived further then they brought Credentials from Scripture. *Acts 17.11.* and *St. Austin* in his daies, in his Controversies with the Donatists, batters down their Church by this Argument, that they could not shew it in, nor prove it from the Authority of Scriptures: now on the contrary the Scripture is not to be received, unless it be confirmed by the Churches Authority: And as *Tertullian* argued of old, (b) *God shall not be God, without mans consent.* It is here, as in dealings between man and man; if I say to some unknown person recommended to me by one whom I know and trust, I should not believe your professions of honesty (for I know you not) were it not for the testimony which my worthy friend gives of you: in this case, the mans professions of Honesty are not the ground of my faith or confidence in him, but only my friends Testimony. Or as if a Jearner in Philosophy should say to his Tutor, I should not believe that to be true, which I read in my Book, that the Earth moves, were it not for the reverence I bear to your deep judgment and great abilities. Here it is

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(a) *Scripturae, nisi ab Ecclesia accepto veritatis testimonio, nullam, ex seipsis aut suis authoribus, apud nos auctoritatem habent.* Lib. 1. Hierarchie cap. 2. (b) *Nec Deus erit, nisi homini placuerit.*

plain, the reading in this book is not the foundation of his faith or perswasion, but only the reverence he bears to his Teacher. And just this (say they) is the case of the Scripture, to which purpose they alledg and own those words of *Austin*, (though they pervert the sense) (a) *I should not believe the Gospel, unless the Churches Authority did move me.* Which if true in their sense, then the churches Authority is the sole foundation of my Faith, and without it the Scripture is a meer Cypher, or at least not sufficient to command, or ground my Faith, which was the thing to be demonstrated. The truth is, the Papists put the same scorn upon the Scriptures, that the Prophet *Elisha* did upon that ungodly King *Jehoram*, 2 *Kings* 2. 14. and bespeak it in the same language, *were it not that I regard the presence, the testimony and the authority of the Church, I would not look towards thee, nor believe nor reverence thee.*

Se<sup>c</sup>t. 3. If it be said, that although the Churches Testimony was necessary before, yet since the Church hath long ago consigned the Canon of the Scripture, my faith is now grounded not only upon the Churches Testimony, but upon the Scriptures Authority.

To this I answer, 1. That now as well as formerly, the Faith of a Christian (acted by Romish principles) doth not depend upon the Word, but barely upon the Churches testimony, which I shall make plain by an instance. I do not believe (supposing I were a Papist) the Popes supremacy, because I read these words, *Thou art Peter*; for if I read these words in *Tacitus*, I should not draw an Argument from them, unless happily I should fall into as merry a vein as *Bellarmino* doth, where he proves Purgatory out of (b) *P'ato, Cicero, and Virgil.*

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(a) *Ego vero Evangelio non crederem, nisi me Ecclesia commoveret auctoritas.* (b) *Bell. de Purgat. lib. 1. cap. 7.*

but because the books wherein I read those words, *Thou art Peter*, is a book of Canonical Scripture, and a part of the word of God, there lies the whole stress of the argument. And this I cannot know, (say our Catholick masters,) and am not bound to believe, but for the Churches Testimony : which Testimony, as it is the onely cause which makes the Scripture in general Authentical *quoad nos*, saith Stapleton, so it must be that alone, which makes this place *Thou art Peter*, Argumentative *quoad nos*, that is, all the force that Argument hath to perswade or convince me, is from the Church, and not from the Scripture, and the Scripture makes it Canonical to me, and its being Canonical, gives the whole weight to the Argument, and *quod est causa causa est causa causati*.

*Sett. 4. 2.* It is not the Words, but Sence of Scripture where the strength of the Argument lies. And that sence, say they, we cannot understand, nor attain, but by the Churches interpretation, which leads me to the second principle of the Romanists, viz. That the sence of Scripture ( which indeed is the very Soul of Scripture, and the only Ground of Faith, and Arguments ) is in many matters of Faith so obscure and ambiguous, that there is an absolute necessity of an Authentick and infallible Interpreter and Judge, to acquaint us therewith, that is, the Church, or (*per equivalenciam Jesuiticam*) the Pope. And it is absurd to expect, and impossible to receive satisfaction of doubts, and decision of controversies of Faith from the Scripture, which is but a dead letter, unless the Church animates it. This is so notoriously owned by them all, that it is needless to quote Authors for it, That which I inferre from hence is this, that according to this Hypothesis, the Scripture in it self, (I say *in it self*), for that is all the present Proposition pretends to prove) is no solid foundation for my faith, and indeed, that it is a meer Cypher, which if the Church  
be



be put to it may have some signification and value, but else none at all. And this is not the letter of the Scripture in it self, but the Churches interpretation, which gives weight to this Argument. And this plainly appears from that saying of their great Mr. Stapleton, which deserves to be often mentioned *in rei memoriam*, and the rather, because Gretserus<sup>(a)</sup> owns it and justifies it. When Stapleton had asserted in his triplication against Whitaker, c. 17. that even the Divinity of Christ, and of God did depend upon the Authority of the Pope; and when Pappus had charged Stapleton with that assertion, Gretser's defence is, that Stapleton did not mean that they depended upon the Pope in se & ex parte rei, but only quoad nos, in respect of us, and so saith Gretser, it is very true, for I that believe that Christ is God, & that God is one and three, I do it, being induced by the Authority of the Church, testifying that those books wherein such things are delivered, are divine & dictated by God. (b) I desire the Reader to observe this, as fully opening the mystery of the Romish Cabal, and discovering the dreadful tendency of Popish principles, making the Divinity of Christ precarious, that the Divinity of the Pope may be absolute and certain. And thus I trow the Pope hath quit scores with Christ, for as he was beholden to Christ for his Authority, so now Christ is beholden to his Vicar for his Divinity: and, saith he, it was truly said by Tannerus, (nor needed Pappus to wonder at it,) that without the interpreta-

(a) Defens. Bel. Tom. 1. pag. 386. (b) *Respondeo hoc ab illo asseritur. Addit enim Stapletonus, divinitatem Christi & Dei pendere a testimonio & judiciaria potestate Pontificis quoad nos, non in se & ex parte rei. Et paulo post: Nique predicanti adeo mirum videri debet, quod à Tannero nostro in examine Relationis Hunniana scriptum est, sine hac interpretatione & testificatione Ecclesie impossibile fore credere (supernaturaliter) ex sola scriptura, Deum esse unum, tres esse hypostases divinas in una essentia: non est, inquam, quod adeo miretur & irascatur infusus Pappus, quia nihil à veritate alienum complectitur.* Defens. Bel. Tom. 1. in Append. 1: ad lib. 1. Card. Bel. p. 386.

tion and testification of the Church it is impossible to believe out of Scripture alone, that God is one, and that there are three persons. Who is it that dare charge these Jesuits with Equivocation? I think they speak as plainly as their greatest enemies can desire. Here you see the meaning of that distinction *quoad se & quoad nos*, viz. they acknowledge the Scripture in it self to be true and Canonical, and it is a truth in it self, that Christ is God; but so far as concerns me, I am not bound to believe either one or the other, but for the Churches testimony, which is the very thing I am now proving and hereby granted, that the Scripture in it self is no foundation of my Faith. And this is the more weighty, because you see it was not an unadvised slip of one man's pen, but here you have it deliberately asserted and defended by a Triumvirate of popish Authors, each of whose works, where that passage was, is set forth with the approbation of several Romish Doctors of principal note.

§. 5. But peradventure, *quæ non prosunt singula juncta juvant*. Although neither the Pope's Authority, nor the Scriptures Testimony alone will, yet both together may constitute a solid and sufficient foundation of Faith; and the Popes Authority being asserted in, and demonstrated by the Scriptures, is a sure footing for my Faith. To which, though it might suffice to object the Circle, (which is here most palpable and evident,) yet I shall at present forbear that answer, and referre it to another place, and shall here consider, whether the Scriptures assert the Pope's infallible authority, as it is pretended. And first in general, whereas several Texts of Scripture are pleaded by the Romanists, in favour of the Pope's supremacy and infallibility, as *Feed my sheep*, — *Thou art Peter, I have prayed for thee*, — and the like: I demand whether these words or Texts of Scripture, in, and for themselves, without the interpretation and testification of the Romish Church, do bind me to believe the Pope's supremacy

premacý and infallibility, or not: If they deny the validity of these Texts, without the Churches Testimony and Authority (as needs they must according to their principles) then it follows that there is nothing in Scripture, considered in it self, that binds me to believe the Popes supremacy, and consequently I do not sin, when I do not believe & own their arguments drawn from these Texts, and that the Scripture in it self is no sufficient Foundation for a Papists Faith. If they affirm it, then let all the Papists in the world give me a reason why these Texts, *The word was God, Joh. 2. He thought it no robbery to be equal with God, Phil. 2. This is the true God.—* 1 Joh. 5. should not in themselves, and without the Churches Authority as solidly prove the Divinity of Christ, as the other mentioned Texts are affirmed to prove the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope.

§. 6. If they persist still to say, that the alledged Texts are in themselves a solid Foundation for my Faith, although such an assertion is contrary to their universal profession, and overturns the whole Fabrick of Popery; yet because I know these *Proteus's* will turn themselves into all shapes, and endeavour to slip all knots, and because I observe all their writings are stuffed with several Texts of Scripture, as if they would make their deluded Proselytes believe they made them the Foundation of their Faith: I shall therefore make some brief remarks upon the chief of their Scripture allegations, in pursuance of the Proposition under consideration, and shew that the Faith of a Papist hath no foundation at all in the sacred Scripture, in the great and fundamental point of the Pope's, infallibility. Onely that you may understand the diffidence, which some of their own great Rabbies have in their Scripture Arguments, I shall mind you of a remarkable saying of an eminent Doctor, *Pighius*, who perswading his Catholicks in their disputations, rather to

argue from Tradition then Scriptures, he breaks out into these memorable expressions; (a) *Of which Doctrine if we had been mindful, that Hereticks are not to be convinced out of Scriptures, our affairs had been in a better posture; but whilst for ostentation of wit and learning, men disputed with Luther from Scripture, this Fire, which alas, we now see was kindled. As if he had said, You may as soon fetch water out of a stone, as prove the Romish cause from the Scripture. Oh the power of Truth! Oh the Desperateness of the popish cause. His counsel indeed was good but they could not follow it; for having once been fumbling about some Scriptures, though they saw well enough how impertinent they were to their purpose, yet having once begun, they were obliged to proceed, and make good their attempts, (for of all things in the world they hate retreating and recanting) lest they should put an Argument into our hands, against the infallibility of the Church from her actual mistakes and errors in the expositions of Scriptures.*

Sect. 7. The principal places of Scripture upon which the Popes supreme Authority and infallibility is founded, are as follow.

The first is Matth. 16. 18. *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it: Ergo, the Pope is supreme Head, and infallible. I shall forbear actum agere, and therefore shall omit several Answers already given, and onely point at some few of those many allegations, by which the ridiculousness of this collection may appear, and*

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(a) *Cujus doctrine, si memores fuissimus, hereticos non esse informandos seu convincendos ex Scripturis, meliore sanè loco essent res nostræ, sed, dum ostentandi ingenii & eruditionis gratiâ cum Luthero in certamen descenditur Scripturarum, excitatum est hoc, quod pyh dolor! videmus incendiurn. cap. 4. Hierarchiæ.*

the desperateness of that cause that can find no better supports.

1. This promise concerns onely the invisible Church of elect persons, which appears thus, because he speaks of that Church, against which the gates of Hell do not prevail, but the gates of Hell do prevail against all reprobates (and therefore the meanest sincere elect Christian in the World, hath a juster claim to infallibility from this place, than many *Popes of Rome* had, whom their own Authors confess to have been Reprobates.)

2. This promise secures the Church as well from damnable sins as damnable errors. I prove it; The Church is here secured against the prevalency of the Gates of Hell: But the gates of Hell may prevail as surely, and do prevail as frequently by damnable sins, as by errors. *Ergo*, if therefore notwithstanding this Text, Popes have fallen into damnable Sins, they may consequently fall into damnable Heresies.

3. The infallibility here promised, extends onely to damnable Heresies, and such as lead to, and leave a man under the gates of Hell, and therefore if it were intended of the Pope and Church of *Rome*, Christ promiseth no more infallibility to him, than he hereby promiseth, and generally giveth to all persevering Christians.

4. This promise is spoken of, and made to the whole Church, and therefore belongs to all the parts and members of it alike. So that if it prove the infallibility of the Romish Bishop and Church, it proves also the same of the Bishops and Churches of *Corinth*, *Ephesus*, *Philippi*, &c. which may further appear thus. That if we should grant the Papists their absurd supposition, that this Rock was not *Peter's* Confession but his Person, yet since the Bishops of *Corinth* and *Ephesus*, and indeed all the Bishops in the World, according to this supposition were built upon *Peter's* person, as well as the Bishop of *Rome*,

and the infallibility supposed is here promised equally to all that are built upon the Rock, it must either prove all of them infallible, or leave the Pope fallible.

§. 5. Whatsoever Authority or Infallibility is here promised to *Peter*, is in other places promised and given to the rest of the Apostles, and therefore what is collected from this place for *St. Peters* successors, may be with equal truth and evidence pleaded from other places, for the successours of the rest of the Apostles. The same Keyes which are here promised to *Peter* are actually given to all the Apostles, *Math. 18. 18* and *Joh. 20. 22, 23*. And if infallibility be here promised to *Peter*, as much is promised to all the Apostles, *John 16. 13. He will guide you into all truth*. And if *St. Peter* be here called a Rock, so are the other Apostles called Pillars, *Gal. 2. 9.* and Foundations, *Ephes. 2. Apocal. 21. 24.* And that 16th of *Matthew* speaks not one syllable more of transmutting *St. Peters* Authority to his successors, than those other places do to their successors: and therefore it unavoidably followes, either that all their Successours are infallible, or that *St. Peters* successour is fallible, at least for any thing that appears from this Text: whether the Popes Infallibility hath other foundations we shall examine in their order.

§. 8. It may be said, that although this place may not seem to be cogent to one that considers it in it self, yet if you take it according to the exposition of the Fathers, it proves what it is alledged for.

But 1. The Fathers generally did understand this Rock to be not *Peters* person, but his confession, or Christ as confessed by him; and this you shall find proved to have been the mind of *S. Cyril, Hilary, Hierom, Ambrose, Basil, Augustine*, yea and the whole Council of *Chalcedon* in that incomparably learned and irrefragable discourse of *Moulin*s, called *The Novelty of Popery*, Lib. 2. cap. 4.

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2. That the Fathers are not infallible guides of Faith and Religion I shall prove in the next Proposition.

3. But howsoever, They that assert the infallibility of the Fathers, when they relate the Churches Judgment, yet allow their Fallibility in expounding Scripture. *Cajetan*, and *Maldonate* both acknowledg it, and practise accordingly, that a man may in many cases prefer a new Exposition, though it be repugnant to the expositions of most of the Ancient Fathers. And *Sr. Kenelm Digby* speaking of the infallibility of the Fathers, expressly saith he understands it onely of the Tradition, or Doctrines, delivered by them as the Faith received from their Ancestors, not of their Comments or Sermons upon Scripture, which are to have no more weight then the Reasons they give for them. Letters between Lord Digby and *Sr. Kenelm Digby*, pag. 10.

9.9. But if all these, and other difficulties were cleared, yet do two things remain behind, in which this Text, and all others are wholly silent, and for them they are forced to fly to Tradition, and the Authority of the Fathers, (of which in the next place.) The first, That all this supreme Authority and Infallibility, which they suppose to have been in *Peter*, was transmitted to his Successor (and consequently *Linus St. Peters* Successor was superior to the Apostle and Evangelist *St. John*, which he had need have no squeamish Conscience that can digest) and yet all this amounts to nothing, unless another thing be proved, viz. That the Bishop of Rome is *St. Peters* successor; and here the Scripture fails them, and the Coronis or Apex of the Argument (without which it is both impertinent and impotent as to the probation of the Sovereignty of the Roman Bishop) is fetched solely from Tradition and the Testimony of the Fathers: And so their Argument stands like an Angel in the Apocalypse, with one foot on the Earth, another on the Sea

Sea, one Leg of it in Scripture, the other in History; and because *conclusio sequitur partem deterioiorem*, the conclusion cannot be *de fide*, or rather, to speak the truth, the whole Syllogism is *extra-Scriptural*. The prerogatives of St. Peter are transmitted to St. Peter's Successors; but the Bishop of Rome is St. Peter's successor: where it appears from what hath been said, that neither proposition is to be proved from Scripture, but wholly from Tradition, and that is all at present I am concerned to make good. And yet if all this were over, they have not done. Behold the misery of a desperate cause: for whereas it is known, and granted by the Papists, that St. Peter had two Sees, he was Bishop of *Antioch* for seven years saith *Baronius*, and Bishop of *Rome*; it must be further evinced, that the Bishop of *Antioch* was excluded from, and the Bishop of *Rome* invested with St. Peter's prerogatives. And would you know the proof of this position (which is the very foundation stone of the Pope's supremacy. You shall have the Argument in *Bellarmino's* words, (a) *It had its rise à facto Petri, from St. Peter's fact. Peter leaves Antioch and comes to Rome, and there he dies, and so his Holiness got the day.* Here I desire the Reader to observe, that all the Faith of the Romanists concerning the Pope's infallibility, depends upon, and is resolved into a matter of Fact, and an uncertain Historical Relation. Nay, to speak truly, there are several matters of Fact, every one of which must be solidly demonstrated, before their Faith can have a firm Foundation. 1. That *Peter* was at *Rome*. 2. That *Peter* was Bishop of *Rome* properly so called. 3. That St. *Peter* died at *Rome*. 4. That it was Christ's or *Peter's* intention, that *Peter's* Successor should enjoy all his priviledges. 5. That Christ or *Peter* appointed his *Roman*, not his *Antiochian* successor to

(a) *De Pontificiis*, Lib. 4.



be this person, to whom such privileges were to be transmitted. If there be a flaw in any one of those, their whole cause in this point is lost. And all these are matters of act. And such is the nature, and uncertainty of matters of fact, that the Papists confess those persons whom they suppose infallible in matters of Faith, are fallible in matters of Fact. Excepting that modern dotage of some of the Jesuites, who have lately asserted the Popes infallibility in matters of Fact: but that is such a piece of Drollery and impudence, that their own brethren, who have not forsworn all modesty are ashamed of it: now to assume, as some of these assertions are apparently false, so there are none of them, but are disputable points, and denied by divers learned men, not without a plausible appearance of Authorities and Arguments. And if the Jesuites opinion be true concerning the doctrine of probability, that a man may satisfy his conscience, and venture his salvation upon the opinions of two or three learned Doctors, then a Protestant may satisfy his conscience & venture his salvation upon it, that all these propositions are false, being denied by far more than that number of learned Doctors. At least this must be granted, that it renders the forementioned positions dubious and uncertain: and so the Papists build their divine faith upon a dubious historical Faith. Yet again: what if *Peter* dies there? must the universal Headship needs go to the Bishop of the place where he dies, and not to another where he lived: *Charles* the fifth was King of *Spain*, and Emperour of *Germany*; if he die in *Spain*, must all the Kings of *Spain* be therefore Emperors of *Germany*? Haply they will say, no; because the Empire is elective, not hereditary. And if that were granted, which the Papists will never be able to prove, that there were such a thing as this universal headship, and that this was to continue, will they pawn their souls on it, (for so indeed they do) that this  
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universal headship was hereditary, not elective? How will they prove it? Christ dies at *Jerusalem*, by this rule the Bishop of *Jerusalem* must be universal Head. Suppose the Pope should leave *Rome*, and go to *Avignon*, (as once he did) and settle, and die there, by this rule the Bishop of *Avignon* must succeed in the universal headship. But I need say no more of so absurd a fancy.

*Scit.* 10. A second place of Scripture is *Joh* 21. *Peter feed my Sheep*. And this feeding must denote ruling as well as teaching, and this Rule (forsooth) must needs be the supreme power, and that power must be attended with Infallibility, and these sheep must be all the sheep in the world, nay, shepherds too, except the *Pas*, or *princeps pastorum* at *Rome*. *Tanta molis erat Romanum condere Papam*. And this Rope of Sand must be called an Argument, by which one may see the intolerable confidence they have in themselves, and their shameless contempt of the Readers, whom they think obliged to receive all their dictates without enquiry. I would have you to wit, that the Church of *Rome* knew what they did, when they invented the doctrine of an implicate Faith, and a blind obedience to all the Churches Decrees, for if men should once dare to open their Eyes and examine their Assertions, all their Craft would be in danger to be set at naught, and the temple of *Dominus Deus noster papa* (as the Canon Law calls him) would be despised, and his magnificence would be destroyed, whom so great part of the world worshipping. But if indeed they will by Transubstantiation turn this handful of straw into a pillar of their Church (as I cannot blame one neer drowning, for catching at every twig) then I shall offer these things to their consideration.

1. That *Bellarmino* (as his manner is) bestowes seven Arguments to prove that which none ever denied, That those words were spoken to *Peter* alone, and neglects that

that which he should have disproved, viz. the reason thereof given by *Aug. Cyril, Ambrose*, and others, and after them the Protestants, which was, not the collation of a new dignity superior to that of the other Apostles, but his restauration to his former dignity of the Apostleship, from which by his great transgression, he might seem to have fallen, as *Judas* really did fall by his transgression, *Act. 1.*

2. If the Text afford them any support,, they must have it either from the *Act*, or the word *Feed*, or from the object or phrase, *my sheep*. For the first, By what Arts can the Supremacy of the Pope be drawn from that word or precept? This feeding (in the judgement of the Romanists themselves) implies nothing but teaching and ruling, and both those are ascribed to all the Apostles without any discrimination, *Mat. 28. 19. 20. Mat. 18. John 20.* And *Bellarmino* himself confelleth, that not onely the power of Rule but the supreme power was conferred upon all the Apostles. (a) Nay, they are ascribed to inferior Ministers, *Heb. 13. Obey them that have the Rule over you:* and *1 Tim. 5. 17. The Elders that rule well:* and to such the very same precept is given, *1 Pet. 5. 1. 2. The Elders—I exhort—Feed the flock of God which is among you.* Doth feeding in one place argue Superiority, and in another place imply subjection? or rather in both places it seems it signifies what the Pope pleaseth. But you must know the Romish Doctors having called the Scripture a *Lesbian Rule*, and a *Nose of Wax*,—they were bound in honour *aut invenire aut facere*, either to find it so, or to make it such: if it be said their charge is limited to the Flock of God among them; whereas *Peters* extends to all the sheep; the Answer is easie, if that be granted, for then the difference doth not lie in the

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(a) *Lib. de Pontifice Romano, lib. 1. cap. 12. §. ut autem.*

act of Feeding, but in the object, of which I now come to speak, that is the second thing; the phrase, *my sheep*.

Granting therefore what *Bellar.* desires, that he speaks of all the sheep, yet herein *St. Peter* had no prerogative above the other Apostles, who are equally commanded to teach and baptise all Nations, *Mat. 26. 19.* to preach the Gospel to every creature, *Mar. 16. 15.* And *Peter's* Diocese surely cannot be larger, unless happily *Utopia* be taken in, or that which is in the same part of the world, I mean Purgatory. But you will say, surely they have somewhat else to plead for themselves from this Text; why yes, These good Masters of the Feast have reserved the best Wine to the last. Here comes in a rare notion, not fit to be prostituted to vulgar apprehensions, you shall hear it, upon condition you will not put them to the proof of it, which they are not bound to do, for *nemo tenetur ad impossibilia*, *No man is obliged to do more than is in his power*: *Peter* was to feed the sheep as ordinary pastours, the rest as extraordinary Ambassadors, and with a certain subjection to *Peter*. (a) If you ask, doth this Text say so? or any other Text? or is there one syllable from whence this may be deduced? you must remember the condition which I told you. And what if this be granted, how comes the ordinary power to be greater and higher than the extraordinary? In the old Testament generally, the extraordinary officers the Prophets whom God raised were superiour to the Priests: And in the new Testament, the Apostles and Evangelists who were extraordinary officers, were superior to Pastors and Teachers, which are the ordinary. How come the

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(a) *ut autem intelligeremus hanc summam potestatem collatam Apostolis omnibus, ut legatis, non ut pastoribus ordinariis & cum quadam subjectione ad Petrum.* Bel. de Romano Pontifice lib. 1. cap. 12.

Tables to be turned ? and the ordinary agent to be advanced above the extraordinary Embassadors ? And what if all this be granted, it signifies nothing, unless two things be superadded ? of both which the Scripture is wholly silent, and their proofs fail them. 1. They must prove that this power of feeding is transmitted to *Peters* Successors in a more peculiar manner, than to the Successors of the other Apostles, and that whatever power *Peter* had, is deposited in their hand, 2. That the Pope is this Successor, to whom these things are concrated. And these they do not pretend to prove from Scripture: So that still the Conclusion remains entire, That the Scripture is not to the Papists a solid and sure ground of Faith.

5. 11. A third place always in their mouths, *Luke* 22. 31. *Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to winnow You; but I have prayed that thy Faith fail not.* A man would not believe, if he did not see it with his own Eyes that such Learned men as diverse of the Papists are, should put any confidence in such broken Reeds and shatter'd Arguments as this is. Truly, saith a Learned man, *Hoc non est disputare, sed somniare* : this is rather a Dream, than an Argument. What thoughts the Papists have of our English Sectaries is sufficiently known, but I must needs do them this right to profess, I do not know that Sect among us (the Quakers excepted) so absurd and impertinent in the allegations of Scripture for their most irrational opinions, as in sundry particulars (and this especially) the Papists are. But because they shall not complain of us (as we do justly of them) that we rather condemn them than confute them, I shall shew the ridiculousness of this allegation to their purpose.

2. If this Prayer secure the Pope from unbelief, and error in judgement, it secures him also from unbelief and Apostacy in heart and life : but this Prayer doth  
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not secure the Pope from Apostacy in heart and life. The Papists generally confess, that several of their Popes were *Apostatici, non Apostolici*, Apostates, not Apostolick persons. All the doubt lies about the Major, which I prove thus: If this prayer was put up for *Peter* in the name and on the behalf of his Successors as well as himself (as the Papists pretend it was, though we deny it) then the same thing for which Christ prays for *Peter*, Christ prays for it for his Successors also, and therefore if Christ prayed that *Peter* might be kept from Apostacy in heart and life as well as in opinion and judgement, then the Major is true; but Christ prayed that *Peter* might be so kept, which I thus prove. Christ's prayer was the Antidote against the Devils malicious design, *Satan hath desired to winnow you, but I have prayed &c.* And consequently the plaister must be as large as the Sore: but the Devils design was not onely to draw *Peter* to error in judgement, but also, yea principally to draw him to Apostacy in heart and life. *Ergo*

2 If notwithstanding this prayer it was possible, that *Peter* himself might fall so far after Christ's prayer, as to teach a false Doctrine, then this prayer doth not prove the Popes infallibility. But notwithstanding this prayer, it was possible that *Peter* might fall so far as to teach a false doctrine. The Minor, which alone needs proof, I prove thus. He that believed a false Doctrine, might preach a false doctrine; but *Peter* after this prayer did believe a false doctrine, which plainly appears from *Act. 1. 6.* *Wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?* by which it is evident (and the popish Expositors confess it) that the Apostles (& *Peter* with them) still retained the old Leaven, of the belief of a Temporal Monarchy of Christ upon earth, (a doctrine which the Papists themselves condemn in the Millenaries.) Nor was this the onely mistake of *Peter* or the Apostles after that Prayer. And indeed it

it was not Christ's prayer but the gift of the Holy Ghost after his death, which did secure the Apostles from error, and us from deceit, in following their Doctrines.

3. If Christs prayer, for the not failing of *Peters* Faith, render the Pope infallible, then St. *Pauls* prayer for the Thessalonians, *I pray God your whole Spirit, Soul and Body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Thes. 5. 23. and for the Philippians, *That they might abound in knowledge, — and approve things that are excellent, that they might be sincere, and without offence, till the day of Christ*, Philip. 1. 9. proves the infallibility, yea the impeccability of the Thessalonians, and the Philippians. The reason is this: because St. *Pauls* prayer being infallibly dictated by God's spirit, and made according to his word, and in Christs name, must as surely be answered, as Christs prayer was; for God, who cannot lie, hath promised to answer such prayers.

4. If the prayer of Christ for the perseverance of Faith, makes him infallible for whom Christ prays, then all elect and persevering Believers are infallible. The Consequence appears thus, Because Christ did pray, and doth intercede for the perseverance of the Faith of every such person. Christ expressly tells us, Joh. 17. *I pray not for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word*. And there is not one persevering Christian in the World, but owes his perseverance to the prayer, care, and intercession of Christ: Hence they are said to be preserved in Christ Jesus, Jud. 1. 1. And therefore either this Argument concludes not for the Popes infallibility, or else it gives him ten thousand partners in that priviledge. And surely, if the prayer for this mercy makes the Pope infallible, much more doth the actual donation of this mercy make believers infallible.

5. This prayer was intended for the other Apostles, as well as *Peter* (though Christ speak to *Peter* in the name

of the rest, as his manner was, as evidently appears from hence, Christ prays for those whom the Devil desires to winnow: That is plain from the words, *Satan hath desired to winnow you, but I have prayed*— But the Devils aim was, not only against *Peter*, but the rest of the Apostles, as Christ expressly tells us, *Ἐνθάδε τοι*, not *σε thee*, but *ὑμῶς you*, in the plural number. And therefore it follows, that as the disease and danger was general and common to all the Apostles, so was that relief and succour, which Christ here afforded, and consequently all the Apostles are interested in this promise, and therefore either it makes not the Successors of *Peter* infallible, or else it makes all the successors of all the Apostles infallible, let them choose which they will.

6. And yet, if all those difficultiēs be overcome, the Conclusion may be granted, without any advantage to their cause. For what if Christ prayed for *Peter* alone? What if this prayer intended and procured infallibility for him? *Quid hoc ad Iphicli boves?* What is this to the Pope? What Scripture, what Father, what man (that is not wholly mancipated to the Popes ambitious humour) will say or can prove that the Pope is interested in all the Prayers of Christ for *Peter*? Or why may not all the Successors of the other Apostles upon as good grounds claim an interest in that prayer of Christ for the infallibility of all the Apostles, *Joh. 17.* (for sure I am those prayers of Christ, that God would keep them through his own name. v. 11. keep them from evil, v. 15. sanctifie them through his truth and keep them unto glory, v. 21. 22. 23, 24. do as fully imply infallibility, as this that *Peter's* Faith might not fail.) Or if I do grant, what they cannot prove, that *Peter's* successors have this as their peculiar, yet why should not this prayer preserve the Chair of *Antioch*, as well as that of *Rome*, from Fallibility? And how can this prayer, *that his Faith may not fail*, be put



put up by Christ for one of them that he tells us, he doth not pray for. *Ioh. 17. 9. I pray not for the world,* i. e. of reprobates, (and such many Popes are confessed to have been) or how can this prayer for perseverance in the faith be offered up by Christ, for such as never had any true faith (as is acknowledged of many Popes) or how dare they say Christ prayed thus for the faith of all succeeding Popes, when they confess the Faith of several Popes have failed? it is true they have a miserable shift, they tell us a *Pope may erre as a private person, though not as a Pope, he may erre personally, though not judicially, not in Cathedrâ: It is no doubt among us* (saith *Costerus*) (a) *That the Pope as a private person may erre, and fall into Heresie.* If this be granted, the Pope is not concerned in this prayer and promise of Infallibility. For if this prayer for *Peter* reacheth to his Successors, then the same privilege for which Christ here prayes for *Peter*, for the same he prayeth for his Successors: but the same privilege, which according to their supposition is here prayed for on *Peters* behalf, is not prayed for on the behalf of his Successors, themselves being judges. For Christ's prayer they confess secured *Peter* from falling into error, even as a private person, which you see they do not pretend for the Pope. But here is the benefit of the Popes reserving the key of interpretations in his own brest, for now he can order it as he pleaseth, and proportion the meaning of any Text as need requires, and so this Text (if you please to believe them) it proves  
1. That *Peter* cannot erre, neither personally, nor judicially.  
1. That the Pope may erre personally, but not

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(a) *Dico nullum apud nos dubium esse, Romanum Pontificem ut hominem privatum, errare, ac in heresin labi posse. in Apologia c. 2.*

judicially. 3. That the whole Church of *Rome* cannot erre personally. But it is all the reason in the world that the first inventers and Authors of Infallibility should have the disposing of it in their own hands.

§. 12. A fourth place vehemently urged on the behalf of the Popes infallibility, is *Deut.* 17. 11, 12. where the *Jewes* are commanded under pain of death to stand to the judgment of the High-priest, and to do according to the sentence which the priest should shew them. Therefore (say they) the High-priest was infallible (else the people had been bound to rest in a false decision) & consequently the Pope, who succeeds in the High priests place, is infallible.

To which I answer, 1. If a man should put them to prove the consequence, how woefully would they be grieved? If these Romanists would lay aside their Dictatorship, and condescend to the proof of their Assertions, how would they prove one of these things: 1. that the high Priest of the *Jews* hath a visible Successor upon Earth among Christians. 2. That the Pope alone is this Successor. 3. That this supposed Successor must be invested with all the priviledges which the High-priest had. But I shall pass by all these, and the horrible impertinency of the instance, & the feebleness of the consequence, & shall assault them on the strongest side by denying the Antecedent, viz. that any infallibility is here ascribed or promised to the High-priest: for proof hereof I offer these Arguments.

1. No more infallibility is here ascribed to the High-priest, than to the Judge and to the inferiour Priests: But the Judge and inferiour priests were not infallible, *Ergo* this place doth not prove the High-priests infallibility. The *Major* is evident from the reading of the Words: the Judge or Civil Magistrate is joyned in the same commission with the Priest, and the people are commanded to acquiesce indifferently in the determinations both of the one and of the other: and therefore either

ther both are infallible, or neither. Again, it is not the High-priest alone, who is here meant, but others also, so the words run in the plural number, *The Priests, the Levites, v. 9. and they shall shew thee*, they shall inform thee.

For the *Minor* it is acknowledged by the Papists, *Ergo*,

2. If this text proves the High-priests infallibility, it proves it in the matter here spoken of: but this place doth not prove the High-priests infallibility, in the matters here spoken of: for those are matters of Fact, *between blood and blood, plea and plea, stroke and stroke*: questions which were decided by testimonies, and in such they confess the Pope may erre. So then their Argument runs thus: The High-priest was infallible in matters of Fact, therefore the Pope is not infallible in matters of Fact, but he is infallible in matters of Faith: but our comfort is, as it is a dangerous Argument; so themselves furnish us with an Antidote; for they deny both Propositions. 1. They deny the consequent, from matters of Fact, to matters of Faith 2 They deny the antecedent, for they do not ascribe to the Pope, and consequently not to the High-priest, infallibility in matters of Fact. You see what shifts they are put to, to support their cause with such rotten posts, to argue from the Authority of the Priests, to end particular controversies between man and man, between blood and blood, plea and plea, stroke and stroke, (which is all that place speaks of) to the infallibility of the Pope, in all the matters of God, and deciding all the controversies of Religion, I think they have sufficiently improved the stock the High-priest left them.

3 Those words ( however they may seem to a careless reader at first view ) do not assert the infallibility of the priest or priests, nor the obligation of the people to an absolute submission and blind obedience to all their dictates and expositions, and that for two undeniable reasons.

1. Because other places of Scripture ( with whom this

must be reconciled) command both Prince and people to keep close to the word of God, and to that end, to read in the Book of the Law diligently, and to do according to all that is written therein, *Deut.* 5. 32, 33. *You shall observe to do as the Lord hath commanded you, you shall not turn aside to the right hand, or to the left: You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord commanded you. So Deut.* 6. 8. &c. It is God's speech to Joshua, *ch.* 1. 8. *This book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayst observe to do according to all that is written therein. And in case of doubt, it is the Prophets injunction to the people to have recourse to the Law, and to the Testimony, Is.* 8. 20. Now put case one high Priest should fall into idolatry (I may well suppose it, for it was done) and should expound the Law so as to favour his opinion & practice, I demand whether in this case, the people of the Jews were bound to believe and obey him, or not, to worship an Idol, or not? Affirm it none will, but one of a Jesuitical, *i.e.* a seared conscience, nor can any Christian hear such an assertion without horror, if they deny it their argument from this place is lost.

2. That sence of Scripture which justifies the Jews in putting Christ to death, is a false sence, and corrupt exposition: but the popish sence of this place, and their argument from it, doth justify the Jews in putting Christ to death, *Ergo* it is a corrupt exposition: for the *Major*, he that denies it, deserves not the name of a Christian, and whatever his successors will do at a pinch, I am sure *St. Peter* did not justify them, but severely condemns them, and highly aggravates their sin in it! *Act.* 1. & 3. & 4, & 5. The *Minor* (about which alone the doubt lies) I shall easily prove; which I am more willing to do, that all Christians may observe the just judgement of God, and the fearful Apostacy of these men, that, rather than recant their errors, will (in effect) renounce Christianity

stianity, and justifie the murderers of Christ; I prove it thus. If the Jews, in that act, did nothing, but what by virtue of this place they were obliged to do, then they did not sin: but the Jews did nothing in the murdering of Christ, but what by virtue of this place (if the popish sence be true) they were obliged to do, *Ergo*. The *Major* they do, and must grant, for it cannot be a sin to obey God's command. The *Minor* I prove: if this law did require absolute obedience to their Priests, and was in force at that time, then the Jews did nothing but what they were obliged to do: But this Law did require such obedience (say the Papists) and it was in force at that time, say I, *Ergo*. The consequence no man will deny, but he that doth not understand it: The *Minor* I prove it in its two branches. 1. This Law bound the Jews to absolute obedience to their Priests: This is known to be their opinion. But because I have no great confidence in the ingenuity of these men, I will prove it out of 2 or 3 of their most eminent Authors. *Beccanus* hath these words, *the whole people in matters of Religion were commanded to follow that which the High-priest enjoined them.* (a) What more plain? Thus *Melchior Canus* (one of great Authority with them) *Moses doth not command that they should believe the Priests, if they judged according to Law, but rather, that they should take that for Law, which the Priest taught them.* (b) *Bellar.* disputes against the assertion of *Brentius*, That the people were to stand to the judgement of the High-priests onely, upon condition they judged according to Law, and argues that they were absolutely bound to follow it. (c) And (that you may see it is

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(a) *Totus Populus in negotio religionis jubebatur id sequi, quod Pontifex judicabat sequi oportere. In manuali de Judice controversiarum lib. 1: cap. 5. nu. 62.* (b) *Non præcipit Moses ut sacerdotibus credant, si judicarent secundum legem, sed potius, ut quæ sacerdotes docuerint, ea pro lege habeantur. in oper. Cani, l. 6. § 10.* (c) *De verbi Dei interp. l. 3. c. 4.*

a resolved case ) *Gretser* defends *Bell.* in it, and tells us plainly, the people were bound to stand to the High-priests judgment, whatsoever their sentence was (a). I think an Adversary will not require more for the proof of the first branch of the *Minor*.

The second branch of the *Minor* is, that this Law was then in force, which I prove thus. If Christ had not at that time destroyed or abolished this Law, it was in force: but Christ had not at that time destroyed or abolished it. The Ceremonial Law which was to expire, yet in the judgment of all intelligent Divines, Antient and Modern, Popish and Protestant, did not expire till the death of Christ, and consequently while Christ lived this Law was in force, which being considered, quite invalidates the last and most plausible evasion of the Papists to this instance as *Becanus* delivers it, *Synagoga fere expiravit* The Synagogue was almost expired: He should have said the precept, *Deut. 17.* was altogether expired, and in stead of it here is, *The Synagogue was almost expired:* and what then? it was not yet expired, nor dead. A man that is almost dead is yet alive, and while the Law lives, it hath its force over us, as the Apostle argues *Rom. 7. 1.* else it is a pretty device of *Becanus*, and will do fine feats, for by the same argument I will prove that the Jews were not then bound to observe their Passover, *quia Synagoga fere expiravit.* And if that Law which enjoyed the observation of the Passover was in full force to the Jews, notwithstanding the nearness of its expiration, then the same must be acknowledged of this Law, which required absolute obedience to the high-priests sentence, & consequently the Jews were then bound by it, and therefore (*horresco referens*) did not sin in it. And because the conclusion is devilish and detestable to all that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, therefore the principles from which it flows are rotten, &

(a) *Quemcumque sententiam tulerunt, Defens. Bel. 3. c. 4. 1239.*

that Popish cause which cannot stand without such prodigious Blasphemies, ought to be abhorred by all that pretend to Christianity. And therefore the Popish gloss upon the place is false, and their Argument from it is wicked, and the true sence is this; they were bound to hearken to the priests, if they delivered sentence according to the Law, and not, if they did grossly contradict it: And the rejection of this exposition, and the assertion of the peoples implicit Faith, hath forced several of them, who pass for sober men amongst our Adversaries, into such expressions as these. *That this action of the priests (in condemning Christ) was indeed contrary to Christ, but their sentence was most true, and most profitable, yea that it was a divine Oracle.* So Canus (a) *That at that time the priests had the Holy Spirit, the spirit of Truth.* So Petrus a Soto (b) *That the acts of that Council were wicked, but the sentence whereby they condemned Christ, was just and true:* so Harding. (c) Really Protestants must be tender in pressing their Arguments too far; for the Papists, like wild Horses when they are chased, will venter over hedge and ditch. We have already made them turn Jews, I am afraid next remove we shall dispute them into Paganism, if they be not there already.

§. 13. And thus I have dispatched the Romanists pretensions from Scripture, for the Popes supreme and infallible Authority. If infallibility have any Foundation in Scripture, it is in these places: And how far they are from giving any countenance or support to their opinion I leave to that Reader to judg, who hath either sence or conscience, or any care of his Salvation. But

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(2) *Nam sacerdotum veterum acta quidem Christo adversa fuerunt, ac sententia hominum alloqui pessimorum non solum verissima, sed reipub. etiam utilissima fuit. Quia divinum oraculum fuisse Johannes testatur, in operibus lib. 5. c. ult. pag. 283.* (b) *Non desuit tunc temporis sacerdotio Levitico Spiritus Propheticus, Spiritus sanctus, Spiritus veritatis. In Prolegomenis,* (c) *Against Jewels Apology c. 6. div. 3. par. 6.* I

I must not do them wrong, I confess there is one Argument behind, and that is taken from St. *Peter's* prerogatives. And *Bellarmino* reckons up no less than twenty eight prerogatives, which all undoubtedly belong to the Pope: yes, that I confess strikes all dead, and therefore I must crave the Readers pardon, and *Bellarmino's* mercy, if I once do (as the Papists do ordinarily) pass over in silence what I cannot answer, for who can resist these Evidences: *Peter's* Name is changed, *Ergo* the Popes Nature is changed from fallible to infallible. *Peter* is oft mentioned in the first place, therefore ought to have the first Seat, and is the chief Bishop. *Peter* walks with Christ upon the Water, and therefore the Pope must reign with him upon Earth, and *Divisum imperium cum Jove Papatenet*. *Peter* payes Tribute, and therefore the Pope should have a power of levying Tribute to reimburse him. Christ teacheth in *Peter's* Ship, and therefore to quit scores, the Pope should rule in Christs Church. Christ bids *Peter* let down his Net, therefore the Pope must catch the Fish of Supremacy. Christ washeth *Peter's* feet, therefore all men must kiss the Popes Toe. These and diverse other such prerogatives *Bellarmino* hath collected together, and vehemently argues from them for the Popes Supremacy, (a) but for these I must desire some time to give in my Answer.

I hope I have said enough to prove the second Proposition. *viz.* That the Scripture in it self is not a sufficient & solid foundation for a Papists Faith (according to their principles) and that the Popes pretended infallibility hath no solid foundation there. But when they are beaten out of Scripture, they use to fly to the Fathers, and to rest their Faith in the Authority of the Fathers: and therefore that must be considered in the next place.

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(a) *De Pontifice, lib. 1, c. 17, ad cap. 25.*



CHAP. III.

*Of the Authority and Infallibility of the Fathers.*

Prop. 3. **T**He third proposition then is this: *The Faith Sect. 1. of the Papists hath no solid foundation in the Authority of the Fathers.* This the rather deserves consideration, because they make their great boast of it, and urge it as a principal pillar of their Faith. It is asserted in their Canon Law, *That the Fathers are to be owned and followed even to the least jot.* And although some of them have declared their dislike of that assertion, yet they generally agree in this, *That the Authority of the Fathers, especially where they consent, is a solid Foundation for their faith to rest upon.* Hence those expressions of their great Doctors, *Take away the Authority of Fathers and Councils, and all things in the Church are doubtful & uncertain,* Eccius. (a) *From the writings of the Fathers, as from an Oracle, Universities have the certainty of their Assertions, and Councils have their decrees,* (b) *Sixtus Senensis.* Melchior Canus, an Author of great note among the Romanists, lays down this Conclusion, *That the common sense of the Fathers in the exposition of Scripture, is a most certain Argument to confirm Theological assertions: For (saith he) the sense of all these Holy men is the sense of God's Spirit.* And a little after, *Although you may require of a Philosopher the reason of a Philosophical Conclusion, yet*

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(a) *Tollatur Patrum & Conciliorum autoritas, & omnia in Ecclesia sunt ambigua, dubia, pendentia, incerta. In Enchiridio de Conciliis.*

(b) *Ex scriptis sanctorum Patrum velut ex oraculis Theologorum Academiae assertionum suarum constantiam accipiunt, summique Pontifices decreta sumunt, in Praefat. lib. 5. Biblioth.*

in the exposition of Holy Scripture; you are bound to believe your Ancestors, though they give you no reason for it; and to defend whatsoever opinions you receive from them, of the Law of Faith and of Religion. And a little after, All those Holy men together cannot erre in a matter of Faith: (a) All the Fathers together do never erre, nor can they agree in one error, saith Bellarmine. (b) The sayings and Testimonies of the Ancient Fathers are not to be examined, when all or almost all do agree in one opinion, saith Salmeron. (c) That which the Fathers unanimously deliver about Religion is infallibly true, saith Gregory de Valencia. (d) from all which we plainly see, that according to their opinion, the judgment of the Fathers is a sure basis and ground of Faith. That is it which I am now to disprove, and to shew, That the Writings of the Fathers neither are, nor can be a safe and sufficient Foundation for a Papists Faith.

§.2. Only let me premise two things, 1. I would not be misunderstood, as if I did intend to derogate from the just Authority of the Fathers, or to defraud them of that veneration which is due to persons of such Antiqui-

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(2) In expositione sacrarum literarum communis omnium sanctorum veterum intelligentia certissimum argumentum Theologo præstat ad Theologicas assertiones corroborandas. Quippe sanctorum omnium sensus Spiritus sancti sensus ipse sit — Quanquam à Philosophis quidem rationem Philosophice conclusionis iure forsitan postularis, in sacrarum autem literarum intelligentia maioribus nostris debes, nulla etiam ratione habita, credere, & quas sententias de lege, de fide deque religione ab illis accepisti defendere. Loc. Theolog. 7. c. 3. Conclus. 5. Sancti simul omnes in fidei dogmate errare non possunt. Ibid. Conc. 6. (b) Patres nunquam omnes simul errant, etiam si aliqui eorum interdum erret, nam simul omnes in uno errore contineri non possunt. Bel. lib. 2. de. Christo cap. 2. & l. 1. de Purgat. c. 10. (c) Non sunt probanda (examinanda) veterum Patrum dicta & testimonia, quando omnes vel fere omnes in unam sententiam conveniunt. lib. Epist. Pauli part. 3. disp. 6. in fine. (d) Quod Patres unanimi consensu circa religionem tradunt, infallibiliter verum est, in Analyfi fidei lib. 8. c. 8.

ty, ability, and integrity, but only to deny that pretended infallibility, which none did more dislike than themselves, as we shall see hereafter. Let them have all the honour which is due to the most worthy men, not acted by divine inspiration, but let them not have that honour which belongs to God only, and his inspired ones. We grant their Testimony is highly credible, especially where there is indeed that which is oft pretended, but seldom proved, *viz.* an universal consent, but their Authority is not infallible. 2. That I do not fall into this dispute, as declining the judgment of the Fathers of the first 600 years, or suspecting their partiality on the Popes side I know sufficiently, and so may any man (whom the God of this World hath not blinded) that doth but read what our Learned Divines have said in this particular, or with his own Eyes look into the Fathers, that there is not one considerable point in controversie between us and the Romanists, but if judgment were to be given by any impartial person from the Fathers (excepting those who are evidently demonstrated to be spurious Authors) their mouths would presently be stopped and their cause and confidence laid in the Dust; only because that work is so thoroughly done by others, and would swell this into voluminous bigness; I shall forbear that, and proceed to handle what I proposed, and I shall prove the proposition by four Arguments.

1. All those Assertions and arguments which the Papists urge against the Authority of sacred Scripture, for the decision of controversies do no less overthrow all the Authority of the Writings of the Fathers. When they attempt to disprove the Authority of the Scriptures considered in themselves, these are the Arguments universally owned and urged: *God would not have his Church depend upon Paper-Books, saith Costerus. Scripture (say they) cannot decide controversies, because it cannot*  
*summon*

Summon and hear both parties, it cannot compel transgressors to obedience, it doth not particularly condemn Hericks: It doth not say, erras Jacobe Gretser, Greser, you are in an error: It speaks doubtfully, and men dispute about the sence of Scripture, and so controversies will be endless. Hence I thus argue; Either those arguments are strong and cogent against the Scriptures Authority, or they are not: if they be not, then the Scripture must be owned as judge of Controversies, notwithstanding all those Arguments. If they be valid against the Authority of Scriptures, why are they not as strong against the Authority of the Fathers? Or what difference is there in this particular, between the writings of the Scripture and of the Fathers? Are the writings of St. Paul deaf, that they cannot hear parties, and dumb that they cannot deliver sentence, and can the writings of S. Austin hear and speak? Doth not the Scripture say, Gretser you are in an error? And do the Writings of Jerome or Ambrose say, Luther you are in an error? Cannot St. Paul condemn Hereticks, and compel transgressors to obedience, and can St. Cyprian do it? What offence hath St. Paul done, that Peter's Successors should thus degrade him? fure, *Manet altâ mente repostum*, they bare him a grudge for reproving St. Peter, Gal. 2. and now they are even with him. In short, forasmuch as the Arguments and premises are wholly the same concerning the Scriptures and the Fathers, either the Authority of both of them must be received as Judges of Controversies, or else both must be rejected; for *in pari causa idem jus*, say the Lawyers, *in the same case there is the same right*.

Again, another of their arguments, why the Scripture cannot of it self be a ground of Faith is this, because without the Church we cannot know which books of Scripture are genuine, and which are spurious. This is the great Argument of Stapleton, and all other Romish Doctors.

In like manner I argue the writings of the Fathers cannot in themselves be a solid ground of my Faith, because without the Churches judgment I cannot tell which of their Writings are genuine, and which are spurious. For that there are great multitudes of spurious Writings masked under the names of the Fathers, is acknowledged by *Sixtus Senensis*, *Bellarmino*, and others, and the Fathers themselves oft complained of that practice in their dayes. So again, *Scripture is obscure and ambiguous, and full of seeming contradictions, and there are many disputes about the true sense, and therefore it cannot be the rule of my Faith*, say *Belharmino*, *Becanus*, *Costerus*, and the rest. The same may be more justly said against the Authority of the Fathers. Their obscurity and ambiguity appears from the very same arguments which they bring to make good their charge against the Scriptures, even from the multitude of Comments which Learned men have made upon the dark passages of the Fathers, in which no less than in *St Pauls Epistles* are *δύσχωρα*, things hard to be understood, which men of corrupt minds do wrest to their own destruction, & from the great disputes which are at this day fervent in the world, concerning the judgments of the Fathers, and their meaning in several passages about which there are as fierce contests as about any passages of the Scripture: it having been truly observed by indifferent persons, that both Papists and Protestants have fortified their several and contrariant assertions with plausible Arguments from the Fathers. Nor are there onely seeming contradictions in the Fathers (as there are in Scripture) but most real and direct ones; and if it be not enough that one of them contradicts another, many pregnant instances are given of the same Father in one place, contradicting himself in another. But for this and other things concerning the Fathers Authority, I must refer the Readers to those learned Authors

thors that have exemplified this in several instances, (a) Once more, *The Scripture* (they say) *is corrupted and falsified in several places, and found to be a rule.* And have the Fathers Works seen no corruption? Yes, we have it under the hands of *Possevinus, Sixtus Senensis, Bellarmine*, and others, who confess their hard hap in this particular, and how wofully they are corrupted in multitudes of places; and needs must the Fathers fare worse than the Scriptures herein, because they were never preserved with that care and conscience which was exercised about the Holy Scriptures, therefore either they must quit their Arguments against the Scriptures Authority, or else renounce the Authority of the Fathers, which is obnoxious to the same inconveniences.

§.2. That the Fathers, whose writings are extant, (for of them this proposition treats) are not infallible, may be undeniably evinced from the Hypothesis of our Adversaries, and the supposed subject of that infallibility which is pretended. Infallibility is the proper and peculiar privilege of the Church, say all the Papists: The only question is, *What this Church is?* Some make it the Pope, others a Council, others the whole body of the Faithful, but they generally agree, that it must be some one or all of those: But the Fathers I am here discoursing of are not one, nor all of these, and therefore they cannot pretend to the supposed infallibility; nor can the Papists by their own principles ascribe it to them. To which may be added, That if the Pope himself, notwithstanding his pretended gift of infallibility, may erre as a private Doctor, either in speaking, or writing, (which all the Papists grant) how can either any, or most of them, who have no other capacity but that of a private Doctor, be exempt from a possibility of erring? and consequently the Fathers are not infallible, nor a solid foundation of a Papists faith.

(a) *Whitaker, Gervás, Dailly,*

§.5. Again, if they will needs obtrude upon us this upstart Infallibility of particular Fathers, I demand whether this infallibility belongs to all the Fathers that lived in one Age, or only to the Writers of that age, or only to those of the Writers, whose works have had better hap than others to come to our hand, and whether to all them together, or only to a part of them? For one of these they must unavoidably assert. If they say the first, that this Infallibility was in all the Fathers that lived in one Age, or the *major* part of them (as in reason they must, for what Scripture or Reason had one to pretend Infallibility more than another, excepting alwayes the Bishop of *Rome*, of whose Infallibility, it must be confessed, there was never any question, *namely*, because in those days none had the impudence to assert it) if that be granted, yet those few, whose writings are extant, (of whom alone our controverſie is) might all be fallible, though the *major* part of the Fathers be acknowledged infallible. If it be said, those Fathers do not only speak their own sence, but the sence of the Church of their Age, and in that respect, they are infallible; which is the common plea, and most plausible argument they use in this point. *The Fathers are infallible, not in their Expositions, but in their Traditions, and the Doctrines they deliver as received from their Ancestors:* Thus Sr. *Kennelm Digby, White, Holden*, and the Papists of the new Model. This I shall have occasion to handle more largely afterward: at present it may suffice to answer two things.

1. That it is most certain, they are so far from delivering the sence of the Church of that Age in the controverſies between us and the Romanists, that they seldome touch upon the most of them, and when they do it, it is *obiter*, and by accident, not *ex professo*, and solemnly, they being then taken up with other matters, as disputing against Jewes and Gentiles, and the Hereticks of that Age.

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2. However, that being purely matter of Fact to understand, and report the History of the Churches doctrine in their Age, if they were infallible in matters of Faith, yet in point of Fact they were not infallible. For the Pope himself is allowed to be fallible in such matters, and as it is confessed, the Pope may erre, through fear or hope, or humane passions, (as *Liberius*, *Marcellinus*, and others did;) or at least for a season: so doubtless might the Fathers, either through weakness misunderstand, or through favour, or prejudice misreport the sense of others (of which it were easie to give many instances.) If the second thing be asserted, that this infallibility belongs only to the Writers of each Age, we would desire them to set their inventions on work, to devise a reason why the Writers were infallible, and not the Preachers, seeing the Apostles who had, and all others that pretend to Infallibility (as the Pope and Council,) challenge it equally in their Sermons, and Writings, in their verbal, and written Decrees, and much less can they with any colour assert, that this infallibility belongs only to those writers which are come to our hands, as if it were not sufficient for the rest that they lost their writings, but they must also lose their infallibility. And yet such is the impudence of these men, and the desperateness of their cause, that they are found to attribute this infallibility, not only to all conjunctly, but to the most of that small remnant of surviving Writers, as you saw from their expressions, which because they are so monstrously bold as to assert, I shall take the boldness to ask, by what right shall five Fathers, viz. *Dionysius*, *Clemens*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarpus*, and *Hermes*, supposing that all the works extant under their names were genuine (for these are all left us of those great numbers of the Fathers of the first age) I say, by what right shall these five invest themselves with the name or privilege of the whole Catholick Church of that Age: (for  
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it is to her alone the supposed promise of infallibility was made) in what Scripture, or Father, or Lexicon, do five Fathers make up the whole Church? True it is, the Pope hath a peculiar priviledge in this point, and is by the Jesuites invested with the name of the Church, ---*The Church virtual*. And it must be acknowledged there is some colour for the Title: for having swallowed up all the rights and priviledges of the Church, he ought to have the Name into the bargain. But setting aside that prodigious *ἁνακεφαλαιωσις*, I would know why I might not as well say, that five of the Romish Doctors, viz. *Salmeron, Canus, Costerus, Stapleton, and Bellarmine*, are the Church of *Rome*, or that five of our English Doctors are the Church of *England*, nay all the Protestant world, as that five of the Fathers made up the whole Church of their Age? Yet again, forasmuch as they ascribe infallibility, not only to all, but also the major part of the Fathers; of these five then, two may erre by their own confession. And that all the particular Fathers have their errors, is generally acknowledged by the Papists, and often urged by them to defend themselves from the force of many convincing allegations from the Fathers against their opinions. Well then, to keep to this particular instance: it is granted that *Dionysius* may erre, and so may *Ignatius*, then the infallibility is preserved in *Clemens*, and *Polycarpus*, and *Hermes*: but they also, or any two of them may erre in other things, and then the infallibility is preserved in *Dionysius*, and *Ignatius*, and *Hermes*. Thus (it seems) infallibility is banded between the Fathers like a Tennis-ball, from one to another, and they have it by turns. Such monsters must be in the Conclusion, if infallibility be in the Premises. That is enough for the second Argument.

§. 5. The third Argument is this: the Fathers profess they are not infallible: either they say true, or false;

if true, then they are not infallible, if false, then they erred in that assertion, and therefore are not infallible, So the Papists are gone by their own Argument, and rule too; for here we have the consent of the Fathers. It were infinite to recount all passages to this purpose: I shall only suggest some few which are evident and undeniable in this particular. *Clemens Alexandrinus* hath these words, *The principle of our Doctrine is the Lord, who hath taught us by the Prophets, by the Gospel, and by the Apostles*, and he adds, *If any man think this principle needs another principle, he doth not indeed keep that principle.* But the Papists say, the Scripture-principle needs another principle to support it, viz. the Churches authority: *Ergo*, the Papists have forsaken the principle of the Scripture, and so saved us further labour of proving their Apostacy. And he adds, *that the standard, by which things are to be examined, is not the testimony of man* (therefore not the testimony of Fathers, Councils, Popes, who I think are all men, save only that several of the Popes are represented by their own Auhors as Beasts) *but the word of the Lord.* And lest you should understand it of Tradition, he calls it just before, the Scripture and word of the Lord: *We do not* (saith he) *believe the assertions of men, they must not only say, but prove, and that too from the*

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*Lib. Stromatum 7. versus finem.* Εχρὼν γὰρ τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς διδασκαλίας τὴν Κυρίου διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος — καὶ ἀποστόλων — τὴν μετὰ δ' αὐτοῦ ἐκείνην δεῖσθαι ὑποτάξαι καὶ τὴν ὅπως ἀρχὴν λαχθεῖν — ὡς αὐτῶς ἀποφαινομένοις ἀνθρώποις πνευματικῶν οἷς καὶ ἀναπαύονται ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ ἔχοντες εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν μόνον ἀσπλῆς εἰπεῖν τὴν δόξαν, ἀλλὰ πιστεύειν δὲ τὸ λαχθεῖν, καὶ τὴν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀναμεινόμεν μυστήριον, ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου ἐκείνην πιστάμεθα τὸ ζητεῖν.

*Scriptures.* What can be more exprefs? So *Basil* (a) tells us, *The Hearers that are instructed in the Scriptures must examine the Doctrine of their Teachers, they must receive these things which are agreeable to Scripture, and reject those things which are contrary to it.* Where we plainly see *S. Basil's* direct contrariety to the principles and practice of the Romish Church.

1. *S. Basil* allows his hearers to examine their teachers Doctrine, so do not the Papists; *The people are so bound to be subject to their Pastours, that if their Pastours should erre, the people were bound to erre with them, saith Tannerus* (.) *A Christian is bound to receive the Churches Doctrine without examination, saith Bellarmine.* (c) Pastours are simply to be heard in all things, nor are we to consider what is said, but who said it, i.e. if he were a lawful Pastour, as *Stapleton* (d) bellows it out (for it is a speech fitter for a Beast than for a Man.) And yet these are the men who will not depart a Nails breadth from the Fathers: This is the Church, the principal note whereof is consent with the Fathers, of which you may judg by this, and what we shall add from others.

(a) In *Moralium regula* 72. in initio. ὅτι οἱ τῶν ἱερῶν τῶν τὰς πίπαι. δαδῶντες τὰς γρηγοῦς δοκιμάζειν τὰ πορὶ τῶν διδασκάλων λαγέθημα, ἵνα τὰ μὲν σὺν-  
φωνα ταῖς γρηγοῦς δέχονται, τὰ δ' ἀλλότῃσι ἀποβῶνται.

(b) In *Collatione Ratisbonensi*. §. 9

(c) *Debet Christianus sine examine recipere Doctrinam Ecclesie.* Bel-  
lar. de verbi Dei interpretatione. lib. 3. c. 20.

(d) *In causa fidei non est considerandum quid dicatur, sed quis dicat:*  
Relect. con. 1. qu. 4. art. 2. p. 91. *Ecclesiam audire Populum fidelem*  
*Christus jubet, Doctrinam Ecclesie populum expendere non jubet.* Stapleton  
*Triplicat. adversus Whitak. pro Ecclef. Author.* pag. 87. c. 9. *Et alibi,*  
*Voci Ecclesie in doctrina fidei simpliciter & absolute acquiescendum est*  
in Relect. con. 4. qu. 4. art. 3.

2. *Basil* makes the Scripture alone the rule by which all other things are to be examined, not Fathers, nor Councils, nor Traditions: but the Papists are of another mind. *S. Clara* (\*) tells us of a *Popish Treatise*, written by a friend of his solemnly approved by the *Parisian Doctors* of the *Sorbon* (so you see it is no particular fancy, but a received opinion) where (saith he) *that author expressly asserts, that that Church therefore receives the Scriptures, because, and so far as, they are conformable to Tradition, not contrarily, i. e. she doth not receive Tradition, because, and so far as it agrees with Scripture: And thus far doubtless he was in the right, saith S. Clara; and consequently Basil was in the wrong.*

That saying of *Cyprians* is never to be forgotten, (b) *That Christ alone is to be heard, the Father witnesseth from Heaven. We are not therefore to regard what others before us thought, but what he that was before all, Christ first did, for we are not to follow the Custom of Men, but the Truth of God.* If the Papists would say as much, this controversy would be at an end. And it is observable, that *Pamelius*, who is very brisk and free of his Notes and Animadversions wherever *Cyprian* casts in a word that may seem to give countenance to their opinions, passeth over this place with profound silence, as well seeing it was so hot it would have burned his fingers.

(a) *Prodiit quidam Dialogus—solenniter Parisiis approbatus—In quo expresse assertit Ecclesiam ideo recipere Scripturas, quia & in quantum sunt conformes fidei, quam ab Apostolis per traditiones accepit, non è conuerso. Et hætenus sine dubio relictissimè. Systemat. fidei c. 11. in initio.*

(b) *Quod solus Christus debet audiri, Pater de cælo testatur—Non ergo debemus attendere quid alius ante nos faciendum putaverit, sed qui ante omnes est Christus prior fecerit, neque enim hominis consuetudinem sequi oportet, sed Dei veritatem, Epistola 63 ad Cæciliam.*

S. Chrysostome (a) is as fully Protestant in this particular (as if he had been of counsel in our cause;) in two points he is positive for us : 1. He presseth the people to examine things delivered to them (therefore he was against the Popish implicit Faith,) *Let us not carry about the opinion of the multitude, but let us examine things ;* and not contented to deliver the assertion, he adds a reason. *Is it not absurd, that when you are to receive money, you do not trust other men, but examine it your selves, and when you are to judge of things, then to be drawn away by other mens opinions? And this (saith he) is the worse fault in you, because you have the Scriptures.* That brings in the second Heresie of Chrysostomes: The Rule by which he commands them to try all things is the Scripture, and (the mischief too is) he calls it a perfect Rule, *You have (saith he) an exact standard and Rule of all things,* and he concludes thus, *I beseech you do not regard what this or that man thinks, but enquire all things of the Scripture.* I know no way to avoid this evident testimony but one : if I might advise them, the next Jesuite that writes, shall swear these words were foisted into Chrysostoms works by the Protestants, and that they are not to be found in an old Manuscript Copy of Chrysostome in the Vatican.

What Protestant can deliver our Doctrine more fully then Origen : *It is necessary (saith he) that we should alledge the testimony of Scriptures, without which our Expositions do not command Faith :* (b) or than Cyril, *Do*

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(a) 13. Homilia in 2. ex ad Corinth. versus finem. *ὡς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος ἀποκρίσας ἀνά τὰς ἀποδείξεις τῶν γραφῶν ἵνα τε ἀκριβῶς ῥηθὶς ἀπαύτως καὶ ἡμῶν καὶ ἡμετέρας ἀποδείξεις τῶν λόγων καὶ τῶν διδασκαλῶν τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων καὶ ἡμετέρας ἀποδείξεις τῶν λόγων καὶ τῶν διδασκαλῶν τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων.*

(b) *Necesse est nobis Scripturas sanctas in testimonium vocare, sensus quippe nostri, & enarrationes nostrae sine his testibus non habent fidem.* Homil. 1 in Jercm.

not believe me saying these things, unless I prove them out of the Scriptures (c.) Or than Ambrose, thus speaking to the Emperour Gratian, I would not you should believe our Argument or disputation, let us ask the Scriptures, ask the Prophets, the Apostles, (d.) St. Austin had none of the Fathers in greater veneration than Cyprian, and Ambrose; yet hear how he speaks of them; of Cyprian thus. (e) I am not obliged by his Authority; I do not look on his Epistles as Canonical, but I examine them by the Scripture and what is repugnant thereunto, with his good leave I reject it. Would the Papists give us but this liberty, we should desire no more: and of Ambrose he saith the like.

Peradventure it will be said in this point, as it is in the general, That although it is confessed by the Fathers, that particular Doctors are liable to error; yet in such things wherein the Fathers do unanimously agree, they have an infallible Authority, and are a sufficient Foundation of Faith.

To this I answer, 1. If this were granted, it doth not in the least secure the Romists concerns, because there is not one of all those points controverted between them and us, wherein such unanimous consent can be produced, but in every one of them there are pregnant allegations out of some of the Fathers repugnant to their opinions and assertions. This their learned men cannot but know, and if they have any ingenuity in them, they cannot deny.

(c) Μὴδὲ ἵπαι τῆς τοῦ τοῦ λόγου ἀποδείξεως περὶ τούτου, Catechesi 4.

(d) Nolo Argumento nostro credas, Sancte Imperator, aut nostræ disputationi, Scripturas interrogemus, interrogemus Apostolos, interrogemus Prophetas, interrogemus Christum. lib. 1. de fide ad Gratianum.

(e) Ejus Authoritate non teneor, ejus literas non ut Canonicas habeo, eas et Canonicis confidero, quod Scriptura non congruit, cum pace ejus, respo. in lib. 2. contra Cresconium, cap. 23.

2. I answer with Whitaker against *Duraus*, urging this very plea. *What a silly thing is it to deny, that that which hapned to each of them, cannot possibly happen to all of them.* (a) And with Gerhard, *the Testimonies of the Fathers collectively taken, cannot be of another kind and nature, than they are distributively.* (b.) Nor can any man deny the truth of the Proposition, if he apprehends the meaning of it; for how can the same persons, being only considered under a double notion, be both fallible and infallible at the same time: And if *Austin, Ambrose, Cyprian*, (supposing these were all the Fathers) be each of them fallible, how can a meer collective consideration of them render them infallible.

3. I answer with Learned Dr. *Holdsworth*, That the Fathers deny this Infallibility, not only to one or two of them dispersedly, but to all the Antients collectively considered, (c) and this I shall prove only by one Argument. They that make Infallibility the peculiar property of the Canonical Writers, deny the infallibility of the Fathers, either collectively, or distributively considered: But the Fathers make Infallibility the peculiar property of the Canonical Writers — and abjudicate it from all other Writers. *S. Jerome* is express, *Except the Apostles, whatsoever else is afterward said, let it be cut off,*

(a) *Quàm hoc ineptum est quod singulis contigit, id negare posse in omnes cadere. Contra Duræum lib. 6. De firmamentis Patrum. p. 414.*

(b) *Patrum singulorum testimonia collectivè sumpta non possunt esse alterius generis quam singula sunt distributivè, Confess. Cathol. lib. 1. par. 2.c.13.*

(c) *Non solum de uno aut altero sparsim, sed de omnibus veteribus evagatim in scriptis suis Patres ubique pronunciant & eorum doctrinam esse ad Scripturas expendenda ut probentur, & eorum testimonia ex Scripturis æstimanda, ut ex istarum consensu aut dissensu magis minusve valeant ad fidei controversias dirimendæ, Lect. 46.*

*for it hath no Authority (a). And again I make a difference between the Apostles and other Writers, those alwaies said Truth, but these in some things did erre. (b).*

*S. Austin makes this difference between the holy Scriptures and all other Writings, that those are to be read with a necessity of believing, but these with a liberty of judging (c). What living man can expresse the Protestant Doctrine in more evident terms than the same Father elsewhere doth. That which is confirmed by the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, is without doubt to be believed, but for other witnesses and testimonies (whether more or fewer, agreed or divided, all is one to S. Austin) you may receive them or reject them as you shall judge, they have more or less weight (d). And again, when he was pressed by Jerome with the Authority of six or seven of the Greek Fathers, he thus Answers: (e) I have learned to give this honour and reverence to the books of Scripture, to believe there is no error in them: But as for others, how Learned or Godly soever they be, I so read them that I do not believe any thing to be true, because they thought so,*

(a) Exceptis Apostolis, quodcumque aliud postea dicitur, abscindatur, non habet postea auctoritatem. in Psal. 86. (b) Scito me aliter habere Apostolos, aliter reliquos tractatores, illos semper vera dicere, istos iniquissimos, ut homines errare, Epist. 62. ad Theoph. Alex.

(c) Id genus literarum à nobis non cum credendi necessitate, sed cum judicandi libertate legendum est. Contra Faustum l. 11. c. 5.

(d) Quod divinarum Scripturarum perspicua firmatur Autoritate, sine ulla dubitatione credendum est: aliis vero testibus vel testimoniis tibi credere vel non credere liceat, quantum ea momenti ad faciendam fidem vel habere vel non habere perpenderit. Epist. 112. ad Paulinum.

(e) Solis Scripturarum libris—didici hunc timorem honoremque deferre, ut nullum eorum scribendo errasse firmissimè credam.—Alios autem ita lego, ut quantalibet sanctitate, doctrinaque prepolleant, non ideo verum putem, quia ipsi ita senserunt, sed quia per Canonicas persuadere potuerunt. Tom. 2. Epist. 19.



but because they proved it so to be by the Scriptures. To conclude, so evident is S. Austin's judgment in this point, that it forced this ingenious confession from a learned and acute Papist, Occam by name, who speaking of a passage of S. Austins about it, hath these words. *It is to be noted, that Austin in that authority speaking of other writers besides the Pen-men of the Scripture, makes no difference among these Non-Canonical Writers: and therefore whether they be Popes, or others, whether they writ in Council, or out of Council, the same judgment is to be passed upon them.* (a) You see S. Austin's mind is plain, and doth (our Adversaries themselves being judges) directly overturn that great fundamental point of the Infallibility of Councils and Popes (which, if you will believe them, is not only true but necessary to Salvation) and yet these are the men that walk in the good old paths; These are they, that maintain no Doctrine, but what hath been conveyed to them by the Fathers. I know no Salvo but that which they use in the great Article of Transubstantiation, viz. to tell us, we must not believe our selves when we read such passages in the Fathers, and that together with the eyes of our Mind, our Reasons, and Consciences, we must give up the eyes of our body to the Popes disposal. And this doctrine of *Austins* (if you will believe the Romanists) when delivered by the Protestants, is a new and upstart doctrine, never heard of in the word till *Luther's* days; and by this you may judge of the justice of that charge, when the like is said of our other doctrines. I might fill up a Treatise with pertinent citations out of the Fathers to this

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(a) Notandum quod Augustinus in autoritate illa loquens de scriptoribus aliis à scriptoribus Bibliæ, inter hos scriptores & illos non distinguit: & ideo, siue fuerint summi Pontifices, siue alii, siue scripserint aliquid in Concilio, siue extra, consimile de eis iudicium est habendum. Part. 3. Dialog. tract. 1. l. 3. c. 24.

purpose, but this is enough for any but those, who are resolved to sacrifice their consciences to the Popes ambition, and for them it is too much.

§. 7. The fourth and last Argument is this: The Papists themselves, whatever sometimes they pretend, yet indeed do not make the Fathers the ground and foundation of their Faith, but acknowledg them fallible. 1 This appears from what hath already been discoursed concerning their avowed Doctrine, That Infallibility is the proper and peculiar priviledge of the Church, and consequently belongs not to the Fathers in their single capacities. 2. It appears from the acknowledged novelty of several Romish Doctrines, which their most learned men confess cannot be proved from the Fathers. Such are.

1. The Doctrine of forbidding the reading of the Scripture to Lay-men ( as they are called: ) *We confess in their days, (viz. of Jerome and Augustin) Lay-men were conversant in the reading of the Scripture, saith Azorius.* <sup>a</sup> And whereas many Popish Authors expound those words *Joh. 5. 39. ἐγὼ μὲν τὰς γέγραπταις* indicatively, as if they did only acquaint us with the practice of the Jewes, and not contain a command of Christ to his hearers to read the Scriptures. Tolet and Maldonate <sup>b</sup> both witness that *Chrysostome, Theophylact, and Augustine, and all weighty Authors, except Cyril, do understand it imperatively for a command of Christ.*

2. They acknowledg the novelty of Transubstantiation. The words of Scotus are these: <sup>c</sup> *Before the Lateran Council, the doctrine of Transubstantiation was no point of*

(a) *Fatemur tunc temporis ( sub ætate Hieronymi & Chrysostomi ) laicos in Scripturarum lectione versatos fuisse. Instit. Moral. l. 8. c. 26.*

(b) *In locum.* (c) *Prout recitatur à Reſſar. de Euchar. l. 3. c. 23. unum addit Scotus, quod minimè probandum eſt, Ante Lateranenſe Concilium non fuiſſe dogma fidei Tranſubſtantiationem.*

*Faith:* and the first *Lateran* Council was above 1100 years after Christ's Birth. And *Alphonfus de Castro* delivers this memorable Assertion: *Many things are known to latter Authors, which the Antient writers were wholly ignorant of, for these seldom make any mention of Transubstantiation.*

3. The Doctrine of Indulgences and Purgatory (I joyn them both together, as being neer of kin) of which Bishop *Fisher* hath this remarkable passage. (b) *No Orthodox Christian now doubts whether there be a Purgatory, though the Antients seldom or never mentioned it. And a little after, Considering Purgatory was for a good while unknown:— and again, seeing then Purgatory was known and received in the Church so lately, who can wonder that Indulgencies were not used in the primitive Church? So Gabriel Biel: Before the times of S. Gregory (and that was 600 years after Christ) there was little or no use of Indulgencies: but now they are used frequently, because the Church without doubt hath the spirit of Christ, and therefore cannot erre. That sine dubio did his work, for I was about to dispute against his assertion, but that phrase quite took away my courage. You see it is a courtesie that the Papists will condescend to prove their doctrine from Scrip-*

(a) *Multa sunt posterioribus nota quæ vetusti illi scriptores prorsus ignoraverunt. Nam de Transubstantiatione— rava est in antiquis scriptoribus mentio. l. 8. contra hæreses in verbo Indulgentia.*

(b) *Nemo jam dubitat orthodoxus an Purgatorium sit, de quo tamen apud Priscos nulla vel quàm varissima fiebat mentio. — Contemplantes igitur aliquandiu Purgatorium incognitum fuisse. Cum itaq; Purgatorium tam serò cognitum ac receptum fuerit Ecclesiæ, quis jam de Indulgentiis mirari potest, quod in principio nullus fuerit earum usus. Rosenfis in confutatione Lutheri. p. 96.*

(c) *Ante tempora beati Gregorii modicus vel nullus fuit usus Indulgentiarum. Nunc autem crebrescit earum usus, quia Ecclesiâ sine dubio habet spiritum Christi, ideoq; non errat, in l. 57. super Canonem Missæ.*

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ture and Fathers; whereas if they would stand upon their terms, they might argue this : The conclusion without doubt is true, that the Church cannot erre ; therefore a fig for the premises. So *Durandus* : (a) concerning *Indulgencies* little can be said with any certainty , because the *Scripture* speaks not expressly of them ; and the holy Fathers *Aug. Ambrose, Hilary, Jerome,* do not at all mention them. And *Cajetan* expressly: (b) No sacred *Scripture*, no authority of ancient Fathers, either *Greek or Latin*, hath brought the rise of *Indulgencies* to our knowledge. And yet (if you please to believe it) this and all the doctrines of the *Romish Church* are no other than such as have been handed to them from the *Apostles* by all the ancient Fathers in an uninterrupted succession. I believe I could instance in twenty several Articles of the *Romish Church* for which they have no colour of Authority from any of the Fathers. But this may suffice for a Specimen of that respect which the *Papists* had for the Fathers, when they do not comply with their Humours. The Fathers were so ignorant for a thousand years together, that they did not understand, or so negligent, that they did not instruct their people in that great mystery of *Transubstantiation*, (than which none was more necessary to be taught, because none more difficult to believe.) The Fathers were so hard hearted and cruel, that they would suffer Souls to fry in *Purgatory* for hundreds of years together, whom they might have certainly released by the help of *Indulgencies*. The Fathers were so indiscreet, that they allowed their Hearers to read the *Scriptures*, and have them in a

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(a) De *Indulgentiis* pauca dici possunt per certitudinem, quod nec *Scriptura* expresse de eis loquitur.—*Sancti etiam. ut Ambr. Hilary. Aug. Hier.* minimè loquuntur de *Indulgentiis*. in lib. 4. de sentent. dist. 20. qu. 3. cum 4. (b) Nulla *Scriptura* sacra, nulla *præcorum* doctorum *Græcorum* vel *Latinorum* auctoritas *Indulgentiarum* ortum ad nostram deduxit notitiam. *Opusc.* 15. c. 1.

vulgar tongue. But now it is not fit to be granted, saith *Sixtus Senensis* (\*) The Church of Rome hath got a monopoly of all knowledg, fidelity, Tender-heartedness (which you will wonder at) discretion, and all good qualities, and Infallibility into the bargain.

This is the excellency of the Romish Faith, that it is calculated for any Meridian. Are any of their doctrines seemingly favoured by the Fathers? why then you shall have large Harangues concerning the Authority of the Fathers, and their adherence to them. Are there any of their points, wherein the Fathers are either silent or opponent? why they are furnished with another strain: that the Fathers were but private Doctors, and had their failings. The chief of the Fathers had their falls, saith *Bellarmino*. (b) In the books of the Ancients, which the Church reads as authentick, sometimes are found wicked and heretical passages, saith *Sixtus Senensis*. \* And so long as the Church of Rome reserves to her self always a liberty of determining what passages are wicked and heretical, I trow she is out of Gun-shot: I do not value Origen's judgment, saith *Peverius* (c) And that you may see the Papists do *insanire cum ratione*, I pray you take notice, that what they want in conscience and honest dealing, they make up in wit, and therefore have devised several ingenious shifts, whereby they can elude the most pregnant testimonies of the Fathers levied against them. Sometimes they answer, that the Fathers speak *ἀγωνιστικῶς* in opposition to the present Adversary they were disputing with, not *δογματικῶς*, as laying down their own positive opinion: thus *Perron*,<sup>d</sup> and *Sixtus Senensis*. (e) Some-

(a) Lib. 6. Biblioth. annot. 152. (b) *Præcipui Patrum lapsi sunt. de verbo Dei lib. 3. c. 10.* \* In libris sanctorum doctorum, quos authenticè legit Ecclesià, nonnunquam inveniuntur quedam prava & hæretica. *Præf. in lib. 5. Biblioth.* (c) in *Rom. 3. disp. 6.* (d) Lib. 1. de Euchar. p. 2.

(e) *Præfat. in lib. 5. Biblioth.*

times they say the Fathers speak *declamatorio more*, hyperbolically, and by excess, Thus *Sixtus Senensis* answers our Allegations from the Fathers for reading the Scripture. <sup>a</sup> thus *Petavius* answers a clear passage of *Chrysostomes* against Auricular Confession. <sup>b</sup> At other times they tell us, the Fathers did not alwaies speak what they thought, but what they saw necessary to confute their Adversaries: thus *Perron* answers the citations from the Fathers against Creature-worship. If you alledge the Epistles of the Fathers, they tell you, the Fathers did not use fully to open their minds in those writings. So *Perron* answers a Testimony of *Austins* against Transubstantiation. Sometimes they plead, that the Fathers speak the opinion of others, not their own; as *Bellarmino* answers a place out of *Hierome*. <sup>c</sup> If you bring any passage out of their Poems, they say the Fathers did use Poetical liberty, as *Bellarmino* answers to *Prudentius* (d). So just was the judgment of the University of Doway upon *Bertram's* Book, of the body and blood of Christ: *Seeing we hear many errors in the Antient Fathers, and extenuate and excuse them, and oftentimes by some devised fiction we de-vy and put a convenient sense upon them, when they are opposed against us in disputations with our Adversaries, we do not see why Bertram doth not deserve the same equity, and diligent recognition* (e) And thus they deal with the Fathers, when they displease their humour, and oppose their Doctrines. But if the Fathers deliver any thing that

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(a) *Lib. 6. Bibl. annot. 52.* (b) *Animadvers. in Epiphaniî hæreses 59 pag. 244.* (c) *Lib. de gratia primi hominis. c. 11.* (d) *De Purgatorio. lib. 2. c. 18.*

(e) *Cum in veteribus aliis plurimos feramus errores & extenuemus, excusamus, excogitato commento persepe negemus, & commodum iis sensum affingamus, dum opponuntur in disputationibus, aut consuetudionibus cum adversariis, non videmus cur non eandem equitatem & diligentem recognitionem mereatur Bertramus. Vide Ind. expurg. in tit. B.*

seems to countenance their conceits, then every passage of the Fathers is dogmatical, and every word an argument: then the Fathers have done playing and quibbling, then they have opened their minds fully, and given us their most serious and last thoughts.

§ 8. And lest you should think it was only the opinions of several Fathers which they despised, I shall acquaint you with their practice, in case of consent of the Fathers, or the major part of them. That the Angels were corporeal, was the opinion of most of the Fathers, saith *Pererius*.<sup>a</sup> For this opinion *Sixtus Senensis* reckons up *Origen*, *Lactantius*, *Athanasius*, *Methodius*, *Hilarius*, *Damasceus*, *Cassianus*, and the second Council of *Nice*, to whom *Maldonat* adds, as ὁμοῦ ἰνφες, *Clemens Alexand.* *Theodoret*, *Tertullian*, *Ambrose*, *Augustine*, &c. such a constellation one shall seldome find in any controverted opinion: Yet hear what *Senensis* saith, *I think the contrary opinion is the truest*. If a Protestant had said as much, what tumults and Tragedies would it have raised in the Roman Court? How would all the world have rang with it? So again, that I may further lay open this Romish imposture, I shall represent to the Readers consideration that controversie concerning the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin, which that it is the common and current Doctrine of the Church of *Rome* at this day, is sufficiently known from the decree of the Council of *Trent* concerning Original sin, (in which decree they expressly tell us, they would not have her included) (b) and from the severe constitutions of *Sixtus* the fourth,

(a) *Lib. 1. in Gen. dis. 106.*

(b) *Declarat sancta Synodus non esse sue intentionis comprehendere in hoc Decreto, ubi de peccato originali agitur, beatam & immaculatam Virginem Mariam Dei genitricem. Conc. Trident. in sess. 5.*

and *Paul* the fifth, and *Gregory* the fifteenth Popes, against those that shall presume to teach this Doctrine, that the blessed Virgin was conceived in sin, and from the practice of diverse Popish Universities, who have not onely received the doctrine of the immaculate Conception of the Virgin, but bind their members by solemn Oath to own it, and from the writings of multitudes of the most eminent Popish Writers, who positively assert it, as *Delrio*, *Henriquez*, *Azorius*, *Snarez*, *Vasquez*, *Salmeron*, *Acosta*, *Abulensis*, *Canus*, *Navarrus*, and a world of others. Now let us see, whether in this point they made the consent of Fathers their rule, or ( which is equivalent, ) what was the judgment of the antient Fathers therein: which I shall give you from the mouths of the Papists themselves, than which they cannot desire a fairer trial. Hear *Canus*: *All the Antients that make any mention of this matter, have with one mouth asserted, that the Blessed Virgin was conceived in sin, as Ambrose, Aug. Chrys. &c. and none of them contradicted that assertion: and then he adds his Evidence, and the Romish opinion, That the argument from Authority is weak, and the contrary doctrine is probably and piously defended in the Church of Rome ( a )* And he confesseth, he knew no other way to confute this argument of *Erasmus* against the authority of the Fathers, than by saying the opinion was not de fide, or no matter of Faith ( b ). A remedy as bad as the Disease.

1. Because the opinion is most absurd, that a Doctrine

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( a ) *Sancti ( antiqui ) omnes, qui in ejus rei mentionem inciderunt, uno ore assererunt Beatam Virginem in peccato originali conceptam, — & nullus sanctorum contravenit; Infirum tamen ex omnium auctoritate argumentum ducitur, quin potius contraria sententia probabiliter & pie defenditur. loc. theol. lib. 7. 6. 1.*

( b ) *Ibid. c. 3.*



is not *de fide*, till the Pope or Council have determined it, from whence would follow amongst many other gross absurdities. 1. That it was not *de fide* while Christ lived that Jesus was the Messias, no Council having determined it. 2. That most of the Articles of the Christian Religion were not *de fide* before the Council of Nice. 3. That God revealing a truth in his holy Scriptures cannot oblige our Faith as much as a Council revealing it in their Decrees. But I need say no more of this, because it is rejected by diverse of their own most learned Authors. *It is the common opinion of Doctors, that a Council doth not make a thing to be of Faith, but denies or declares, that such a thing is, or formerly was de fide, as the Holy Fathers abundantly confirm, saith White (a).*

2. Because this was *de fide*, according to their own Doctrine. For the Council of *Basil* had positively defined and determined it, as pious and agreeable to Faith, Reason, and Scripture, to be embraced by all Catholicks, and that it should be lawful to no man to teach the contrary. (b) This put *S. Clara* so hard to it, that he is forced to this horrible shift, that they onely defined it, *tanquam piam & consonam fidei*. Now the terms *tanquam & consonam* are terms of diminution (c). But to return: *Salmeron* treating of this point tels us, that his Adversaries reckon 200, others 300 Fathers against his and the Romish Doctrine of the immaculate conception: Well, what is his Answer? Really, it is so full of Heresie that I fear they will chide me for translating it: he tels you, *The Argument from Authority is weak, I answer,*

(a) *Communis Doctorum sententia fert Concilium non facere aliquid de fide, sed decernere esse seu primum fuisse de fide, ut sancti etiam Patres abunde confirmant. De fide & Theologia. tract. 2. sect. 22.*

(b) *Ses. 36. (c) in systemate fidei. c. 35. p. 377.*

(saith he) *from Exod. 23.2. Thou shalt not speak in a cause to incline after many to wrest judgment, as Augustine answered the Donatists; it was a sign that a cause wanted Truth, which leaned upon Authority: That the younger Doctors see further than the Antients: that is to say, the Romish Doctors are wiser than the Antient Fathers. (a) I recommend these passages to the care of my Lords the Inquisitors, the next time the purging humour takes them, they richly deserve a room in the Index expurgatorius.*

And yet these are the only Adorers of the Antient Fathers, that tell you, *we do not receive part of the Doctrine of the Fathers, and reject part, but we imbrace it all, saith Durand. (b) We hold the whole Volumes saith Campian (c.) These are they that hold the Fathers to be uncorrupted judges of Controversies, whom God would not suffer to fall into error, and lead others into it, saith Costerus (d.) Will you see more of this mystery of Iniquity? I shall only name the rest: Diverse Popish Authors of prime note acknowledg that it was the general opinion of the Fathers, that the Sacrament of the Lords Supper ought to be given to Infants. So Maldonate, The opinion of S. Augustine, and Innocent the first, (a Pope, and therefore his*

(a) *Argumentum ab autoritate infirmum est—Respondemus ex verbo Dei Exod. 23. 1. In iudicio plurimorum non acquiesces sententiae ut à vero devies, cum Augustinus respondeat Donatistis signum esse causae à veritatis nervo destitutae, quae soli multorum auctoritati, qui errare possunt innititur. Doctores quò juniores eò perspicaciores sunt. Diss. 51. in Rom. 5.*

(b) *Nos Patrum Doctrinam non aliqua ex parte admittimus, alia repudiamus, sed integram amplectimur. Contra Whitak. fol. 140.*

(c) *Tentimus integra volumina. In decem rationibus rat. 3.*

(d) *In corrupti sunt Iudices controversiarum, neque enim credibile est eos praesertim in rebus quae fidem attingunt, à Deo sic destitutos fuisse, ut ipsi errarent, doctrinaque sua alios in errorem induxerint. In Enchirid. p. 64.*  
opinion

opinion infallibly true) flourished in the Church for 600 years that the Eucharist was necessary to Infants. (a) That the Lords Supper should be received by the people in both kinds. For the Council of *Constance* in that very place where it takes away one kind (the Cup) doth acknowledge that the use of both kinds by the people was instituted by Christ, and enjoyed by the people in the ancient Church (b.) That the Saints departed should not be admitted to the vision of God before the day of judgment; So much *Perron* confesseth, and *Sixtus Senensis*, (c) that the Saints shall reign with Christ a thousand years, that *Pamelius* grants (d). In all these and several others, it is known that the Church of *Rome* asserts the contrary, how truly and justly I dispute not, nor is it material to my purpose, which was only to shew how upon all occasions, where need requires, they do as little regard the Authority of the Fathers as any, whom they must traduce for so doing. But would you know the mystery of this? why, *The Fathers are not reckoned as Fathers when they deliver any thing which they did not receive from the Church*, saith *Duraus* (e.) In earnest, that saying deserved a Cardinals Cap. And *Baily* the Jesuite seconds him in it, where putting this question, *Whether the Authority of the Doctors (Fathers) ought to be admitted?* He answers, *Yes, as far as the Church approves of them.* (f) *q. d.* The Fathers have Authority with us as far as we please;

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(a) *Missam facio Augustini & Innocentii 1. sententiam quæ sexcentos circiter annos viguit in Ecclesia Eucharistiam etiam infantibus necessariam. in Joh. 6. vers. 53.* (b) *Sessio 13.* (c) *Lib. 6. Bibl. Annot. 345.* (d) *In notis super Cypriani hortationem ad martyrium.*

(e) *Neque enim Patres censentur, cum suum aliquid, quod ab Ecclesia non acciperunt, scribunt vel docent. con. Whit. ubi suprà.* (f) *Debetne admitti Doctorum (Patrum) auctoritas? Debet quatenus ab Ecclesia approbatur. in Catechis.*

I will add a third ( that you may see it is a ruled case :) and that is *Gretzerus*, *A Father*, saith he, *is one that feeds the Church with wholesome Doctrine : but if in stead of Corn he give Chaff, or Tares, he is not now a Father but a Step-Father, not a Teacher but Seducer.\**

When the Fathers say any thing which seems to countenance their positions, then they are Fathers, uncorrupt Judges, infallible interpreters, and Purgatory is too mild a punishment for him that shall go one hairs breadth from them. But if the Fathers will once begin to take upon them, if they will exceed those bounds the Pope hath set them, and contradict his interest or opinion, then it is time to take them a peg lower, then they call them Fathers, but make Children of them: They had better have held their Tongues, for now all comes out, and the Papists are the *Chams* ( as they call the Protestants ) who uncover their Fathers Nakedness: Then *Eusebius* ( who when he is Orthodox in the Roman account passeth for a most famous Writer, a most Learned man, and a Catholick with *Lindanus* <sup>a</sup>, *Sixtus Senensis*, <sup>b</sup> and others ) is all on a sudden Transubstantiated into an *Arrian* Heretick with *Costerus* (c), and *Baronius* (d). Then poor *Tertullian* ( when he speaks righteous things, passeth for a most noble Author, the chief of all the Latin Fathers with *Lindanus* (e) ); is not so much as a man of the Church,

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\* *Nam Ecclesie Pater ille dicitur qui Ecclesiam salvari doctrina atq̃ & pascit—Jam vero si pro salutifero doctrinae pabulo—offerat & adducat lolium & zizania—perversorum dogmatum—atenus non Pater est sed vitricus, non doctor sed seductor. In lib. 2. de jure ac more prohibendi libros noxios. cap. 10*

(a) *Panopl. l. c. 17. § imprimis.* (b) *Apud Baron. in Anal. tom. 3. an. 340.* (c) *Hereticus Arrianus. In Apologia contra Grevinchovium c. 8. n. 9.* (d) *Loco jam citato.*

(e) *Nobilis admodum Author, Latinorum omnium facile Princeps. Panop. lib. 1. c. 3.*

ay, he is an heretical Author, an Heresiarch, a Montanist say Azorius <sup>a</sup> and Bellar. <sup>b</sup> Then Origen ( who when he is a good boy, passeth for a Witness beyond exception with Duraus, & another master of the Churches after the Apostles, as Jerome calls him, saith Lindanus <sup>d</sup>) is a meer Schismatick saith Canus <sup>e</sup>, the Father of the Arrians and Eunomians, saith Maldonate <sup>f</sup>. Then Constamine himself ( that you may see the Church of Rome is not guilty of respect of Persons,) is not much to be regarded, he was a greater Emperour than Doctor, saith Bellarm. <sup>g</sup> Then Lactantius is better skilled in Tully than in the Scripture: and Victorinus was a Martyr but wanted Learning, saith Bellarmine <sup>h</sup>. Nay, I think both He and the rest of the Fathers wanted wit as well as learning: for if they would but have blotted out all Anti-Romish passages ( which might have been done with one blot, provided it reached from the beginning to the end of their works) they had all passed for Orthodox and aduirable men, and we had not heard one word of their infirmities or miscarriages.

What need I trouble my self and the Reader with saying that which all the World knowes concerning the Papiists receding from the common sence of the Fathers in expositions of Scripture, and preferring new interpretations before them, not fearing their own Tridentine thunderbolt, *That no man should dare to interpret Scripture*

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<sup>a</sup> Tom. 1. Moral lib 8. cap. 16. <sup>b</sup> lib. 1. de sanctis. c. 5. <sup>c</sup> Testis omni sanè exceptione major. contra Whitak. fol. 109. <sup>d</sup> Alterum Ecclesiarum post Apostolos Magistrum aiebat Hieronymus. Panop. lib. 3. c. 26. <sup>e</sup> Loc. com. lib. 7. c. 3. num. 11. <sup>f</sup> In Johan. 1. 3. <sup>g</sup> De verbo Dei l. 4. c. 11. <sup>h</sup> Lactantius magis librorum Ciceronis quam Scripturarum sanctarum peritus Victorinus martyr quidem fuit, sed ei eruditio defuit Lib. 1. de sanctis. c. 5. in finè.

against the common consent of the Fathers (a.) For which I shall only refer the Reader to those places where he may be more fully satisfied, that this was the opinion and practice of the Learned and approved Romanists, as Cajetan (b,) Pererius (c,) Maldonate (d,) and several others e.

§. 9. In short, to strike the business dead, you shall have the positive Judgment of the principal pillars of the Romish Church. Sacred Doctrine (saith Aquinas) useth authority of Scripture as a necessary Argument; but the Authorities of other Doctors of the Church only as a probable Argument: for our Faith leans upon the revelation made to the Apostles and Prophets, and not to other Doctors (f.) The Authorities of the Fathers without the Scripture doth not oblige my Faith, saith Biel g. It is the property of the Holy Scriptures, that there is no error in it which needs correction, saith Baronius h. The writings of the Fathers (saith Bellarmine in totidem terminis) are not a rule, and have not authority to oblige me i. And not contented to assert, he elsewhere offers proofs of the invalidity of the

. (a) Sessione 4. b In Præfatione in Pentateuchum. c lib. 3. in Gen. qu. 5. n. 45. d in multis locis, Job 8. 36. Mat. 16. 18. & 19.

e Stella in Luc. 10. 21. Baronius in Annal. Tom. 1. An. 34. Patres in interpretatione Scripturarum non semper ————— Catholicam Ecclesiam sequuntur.

f. Sacra Doctrina Authoritatibus Canonice Scripturæ nititur propriè ex necessitate Argumentando, authoritatibus autem aliorum Doctorum Ecclesiæ arguendo ex propriis, sed probabiliter. Innititur enim fides nostra revelationi Apostolis & Prophetis factæ — non autem revelationi, si quæ fuit, aliis Doctoribus factæ. Part. 1. qu. 1. art. 8

g. Authoritates Patrum, sine Scripturis non obligant ad fidem. Lect. 41 in Canon. Missæ.

h Divinæ tantum Scripturæ proprium est, nihil habere erroris, quod corrigatur. Tom. 4. Annal. An. 369. i Patrum scripta non sunt regula, nec habent auctoritatem obligandi. De Concil. lib. 2. c. 12. §. Dico secundum.

Fathers without, and their perfect subjection to the Authority of the Church and Bishop of Rome. The Fathers execute the office of Doctors, but Councils & Popes execute the office of a Judge committed to them by God <sup>a</sup>. And again: The Pope hath no Fathers in the Church, but all are his Sons: no wonder then that the Sons are subject to the Father, not the Fathers to the Sons <sup>b</sup>. Thus Gregory de Valentia cuts the Knot he cannot untie: If the consent of Doctors cannot be made out, the Pope may use his Authority <sup>c</sup>. Really these Jesuites are most ingenious fellows, they are resolved never to be at a non-plus: When they saw the Scripture was not for their turns, they vote that should not be the Judge of Controversies, and fled to the Fathers. When they saw multitudes of notable passages cited out of the Fathers destructive to their Hierarchy, then it must be Consent of the Fathers: Now because they know they cannot make out the Consent of the Fathers for any one Article of their Faith, here is a *Salvo* for that, the Popes Authority is evident; it is but saying, that is a first principle, and all controversies are at an end. By this time I think I may expect the Reader, that hath but a dram of Ingenuity in him, must needs acknowledg that the Authority of the Fathers is neither *ex veritate rei* ( in truth ) nor *ex opinione Pontificiorum* ( in the judgment of the Papists ) a solid foundation for a Papists Faith, which was the Proposition to be proved. I shall dismiss this with two Observations.

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(a) *Augustinus & ceteri Patres in commentariis fungebantur officio Doctorum, at Concilia & Pontifices funguntur officio Judicis à Deo sibi commisso lib. 3. de verbo Dei c. 10.* (b) *Pontifex non habet ullos in Ecclesia Patres, sed omnes filios. Quid vero mirum est, si non pater filiis sed filii patri suo subiciantur. Lib. 2. de Romano Pontifice, c. 27.*

(c) *Si de doctorum consensu non aperte constaret, sua tunc constaret Autoritas Pontifici, in Analyst lib. 8. c. 8. p. 119.*

1. How sweetly do the Romish Doctors agree in that which they acknowledge to be a principal foundation of Faith, *viz.* the authority of the Fathers.

2. I shall leave this Syllogism, taken out of their own Authors, to the consideration of the prudent Reader: *If you take away the Authority of Fathers and Councils, all things in the Church are uncertain*, saith *Eccius*, as you saw before: but *Bellarmino*, and others, have here taken away the Authority of the Fathers: and in the next Chapter you shall see they take away the Authority of Councils: *Ergo*, there is nothing certain in the Romish Church. Thus I have shewed that the Faith of the Papists hath no sure ground or foundation in the Authority of the Pope, Scriptures, or Fathers: Now I come to the fourth particular, the Authority and Infallibility of the Church and Councils, which is the *sacra anchora*, the principal refuge of a languishing cause.

#### CHAP. IV.

##### *Of the Authority and Infallibility of the Church and Councils.*

*Sect.* 1. **L** Et us therefore examine in the next place, whether the Councils will stand them in better stead. Whether the splendid name and Authority of the Church be a solid and sufficient Foundation of Faith. In order to which I shall lay down this proposition. That the Authority of the Church and Councils is no sufficient Foundation for a Papists Faith. This I shall more fully discuss, because here it is that very many of the Popish Doctors do build their Hopes, and lay the foundation of their Faith. And here indeed they have greatest appearance of probability.

A general Council rightly congregated cannot erre in the faith, saith *Alphonsus de Castro*.<sup>(a)</sup> Councils represent the

(a) *Concilium generale recte congregatum non potest errare in fide, l. 4. adversus hereses in verbo Concilium.*



Catholick Church which cannot erre, & therefore they cannot erre, saies Eccius and Tapperus<sup>(b.)</sup> The decrees of general Councils have as much weight as the holy Gospel, saith Coſterus<sup>(c.)</sup> Councils approved and confirmed by the Pope cannot erre, saies Canus<sup>(d)</sup> and Bellar. Councils, being the highest Ecclesiastical Judicatories cannot erre, saith Tannerus<sup>(f.)</sup> The decrees of Councils are the oracles of the holy Ghost, saith Stapleton<sup>(g.)</sup> Surely now I may cry out *εὐαγγέλιον*: Here is the ground and pillar of truth, and at least—*ſpes altera Romæ*.

§.2.1. Then I would know whence comes this infallibility of Councils? it must be from Gods promise (for they do not pretend it is any natural inherent property of any man or men single or conjunct.) And this promise must be made known to us by divine Kevelation, *i. e.* either by Scripture or Tradition (for other Revelation they do not pretend to:) Thus far they and we are agreed: Now I assume, that the infallibility of Councils is not revealed to us, neither in the one nor in the other.

§.3.2. Not in the Tradition of the Fathers, for among all the Traditions mentioned by them, you shall not find this concerning the infallibility of Councils: Nor have our Adversaries (that I know of) alledged one considerable ancient Father, asserting that such a Tradition was conveyed to them from the Apostles; though had there been such a Tradition, they who were so careful to enumerate all the Traditions of far less consequence, which pretended to an Apostolical Original, neither should nor would have omitted to acquaint the Church with so important a Tradition, as this is now supposed to be: and this

(b) *Concilia repræſentant Eccleſiam Catholicam quæ errare non poteſt. Ergo etiam ipſa errare non poſſant.* Eccius in *Enchir.* c.2. Tapper in *Art.* 1. *Louan.* 9. 5. (c) *Decreta Conciliorum generalium—idem habent pondus & momentum, quod ſancta Dei Evangelia.* in *Enchir.* p. 46.

(d) *Lib. 5. loc.com.c.4.* (e) *Bel. de Conciliis—lib. 2. c. 2.* (f) *In parte 3. Anat.Dem.10. Sect. 202.* (g) *In Relict. Controv.q. 3.art.4. p. 610.*

might

might suffice for Answer, till our Adversaries give us an instance for any such Tradition.

§. 4. But because Tradition and the Testimony of the Fathers is their chief Pillar of the Infallibility of Councils (the wiser sort of them being sensible of the impertinency of their Scripture allegations, ) I shall consider this a little more largely than at first I intended, and shall endeavour to make good four things, which if proved, will give a deadly stroke at the Root of infallibility. 1. If there were such a Tradition among the Fathers as is pretended, it is no solid and sufficient foundation for our Faith. 2. If the Ancients did believe the infallibility of Councils, yet it doth not follow they believed it upon the account of such a Tradition. 3. It doth not appear that the Ancients did believe the infallibility of Councils. 4. It doth appear that the Antients did believe the fallibility of Councils.

§. 5. The first proposition is this ; That if some of the Fathers did tell us they had such a Tradition among them as is pretended, concerning the Infallibility of Councils, it is no solid and sufficient Foundation for our Faith, because the Fathers were subject to errors and mistakes, as we have now proved, and as the Papists confess, at least they might erre in matters of fact (for in such things they acknowledge the Pope himself to be fallible.) And this was purely a question of fact, whether such a Tradition were delivered to them. And that the Fathers were oftentimes deceived in the point of Traditions, and in matters of fact is acknowledged by several of the most learned Papists, and *Baronius* gives us divers examples of their mistakes in sundry parts of his *Annals*, and that too amongst the first Fathers, who had far greater opportunities to know the truth than their followers, and greater integrity to deliver nothing contrary to their knowledge, and much more mistakes there might

might be committed by those that came after them.

if it be said, That although some particular Fathers, might mistake in the matters of Tradition, yet the Fathers consenting therein are infallible.

This is already answered in the former Chapter, to which I shall here add; that it is impossible for us at this distance to understand the consent of the Fathers. *e. g.* of the first or second Age, there being such a small and inconsiderable remnant left of them, like two or three planks after a common shipwrack. *Gregory de Valentia* confesseth even of the Doctors of the Age we live in, that it seldome happens that we can sufficiently understand the opinion of all the Doctors that lived in one Age (a). How much more hard, nay impossible must it needs be to understand the mind of that Age which is gone 1500 years ago? And *Melchior Canus* confesseth, That the Authority of most of the Holy (Fathers) if a few did contradict them, will not afford a Divine solid Argument (b). So that if such a Tradition had been delivered by some, yea the major part of the Fathers, if some others, though fewer had contradicted it, Faith hath lost its foundation, and this might be done (and such things in all probability were oft done) though no footsteps of it are come to the memory of Posterity. As *Austin* speaks of *Cyprian*, when he was pressed with his authority, he answers, Happily he did recant, though we know it not: for neither were all things done among the Bishops at that time committed to writing, nor do we know all things that were committed to writing (c)

(a) *Facendum est raro accidere posse, ut quæ sit Doctorum omnium eodem tempore viventium de religione sententia, satis cognoscatur. Lib. 8. Ana/yf. cap. 8. p. 119.* (b) *Plurimum Sanctorum auctoritas reliquis licet paucioribus reclamantibus, firma argumenta Theologo sufficere & præstare non valet. Loc. Theol. lib. 7. cap. 3.*

(c) *Fortasse scellum sed nescimus. Neq; enim omnia quæ illo tempore inter Episcopos gesta sunt, memoriæ literisq; mandari potuerunt, aut omnia quæ mandata sunt, novimus. Lib. 2. con. Donat. cap. 4.*

And if this was considerable in *Austins* dayes, who lived within two hundred yeares of those times, how much more weighty must it be to us, that come twelve hundred years after him? Now then to put a case (because this consideration shakes the very pillars of Popery, and overthrows almost all their pretensions from Tradition and the Authority of the Fathers,) suppose the major part of the Antient Fathers had said *in terminis*, that the Bishop of *Rome* was supreme head and infallible governor of the Church (though nothing was further from their thoughts) and suppose a less number of the Fathers did in that Age contradict it, though the contradictors happily either did not commit their opinion to Writing, or if they did, their writings might be suppressed by the major part (as hath been the lot of most ages) or by the injury of time are lost (which the Papists cannot say was impossible for the Writings of the Fathers, seeing they tell us that *de facto* some of the books of Holy Scripture are lost :) the next Age comes and understands the truth of what I have now supposed: The question is, Whether the Authority of the Major part of the Fathers of the former Age be a sufficient foundation for their Faith in the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility? *Melebius Canus* saith No: Now then the next Age or ages having happily forgotten such contradictions (which the Age immediately next remembred;) the question is whether that Foundation, which was insufficient to the precedent Age is now through their ignorance of such contradiction become sufficient to the following Age? if they affirm it, it would become the Jesuites in point of gratitude to write a Panegyrick in praise of Ignorance, which is, it seems, not only the Mother of Devotion, but of assurance and certainty of Knowledge? if they deny it, they confess the weakness of their assertion: In short, he that will lay the foundation of his Faith

Faith upon such a quick-sand, must either prove the negative that there was no such contradiction as we have supposed ( which is impossible ) or confess his Faith relies upon the Sand ( which is dreadful ) And again, admit they had the consent of Fathers in this Tradition, I have given several instances, wherein they acknowledge they have departed from the consent of Fathers, and that there were several Doctrines which ( if we believe the Papists, when they tell us the Fathers owned no Doctrine but what they had by Tradition ) the Fathers received by Tradition, wherein they were *de facto* mistaken, and why might they not be mistaken in this? We all know how general the Millenary opinion was among the Fathers of the second and third Centuries, though it be said all came from the mistake of *Papins*, an honest but credulous Doctor: And dare these men venture their Souls upon it, that *Papins* was the only credulous Author? and that this was the only mistaken Tradition? or that it was impossible for those Fathers who were so many of them imposed upon by one credulous person in one point to be imposed upon by another in other points? All these, and many other uncertainties must not only be allowed, but are laid in the very foundation of infallibility

§ 6. The second particular is this: That if the Ancients did believe the infallibility of Councils, yet it doth not follow they believed it upon the account of such a Tradition, for they might believe it upon other grounds. It is evident they believed many ( nay, to speak the truth, all ) Doctrines, because they apprehended them to be contained in the Scriptures, and why might it not be so with this? Why might not the Fathers believe this ( if they did believe it ) upon the same misapprehensions and mistakes ( which the Papists at this day run into ) concerning the sense of those Scriptures which are alledged for the infallibility of Councils? And consequently

frequently the Fathers opinion of the Infallibility of Councils doth not argue that they received such a Tradition from the Apostles, but only that this was their opinion; wherein, no less than in other points, they were subject to errors, as I have proved.

§.7. The third Proposition is this: It doth not appear, that the ancient Fathers did believe the Infallibility of Councils. For trial hereof I shall refer my self to those Arguments and Authorities which are alledged for the proof of the contrary position. *Bel.* brings three arguments to shew that the Antient Fathers held, that general councils could not erre, & not one of them speak to the point.

His first Argument is this: *They affirm that the sentence of a general Council in the cause of Faith is, the last judgment of the Church, from which there lies no appeal, & which cannot be made void or retracted. Hence it evidently followes that such Councils cannot erre, because else it were a very unjust thing to compell Christians that they should not apeal from that judgment which may be erroneous* <sup>a</sup>. I answer 1. *St. Austin* did hold that the sentence of a general Council might be retracted, though not by private Christians, yet by a following general Council, former general Councils (saith he) are corrected by the latter, of which more by and by, and that is enough to shew he did not believe it infallible. 2. The Consequence is weak and denied by the Protestant, and therefore might be denied by the Fathers: If the consequence be infirm now, it could not be strong then; and for this we have the testimony of a Papist *S. Clara*, who tels us that *Calvin*, and *Robertus Baromius*, and all the Protestants, and some others, who deny the Infallibility of a general Council, do nevertheless acknowledge it to be the

(a) *Affirmant primum Concilii generalis sententiam esse in causa fidei ultimum Ecclesie judicium, à quo appellari non posse, quodque nullo modo irritari vel retractari queat. Hinc autem apertissime constat ejusmodi Concilia non errare, &c.* lib. 2. de Concil. auctor. c. 3.

supreme Judge of Controversies upon Earth, and that such a Council hath a determining and decisive power, which all are externally bound to obey to prevent Schisms (a). Nor is it unjust, but necessary for the preservation of order and prevention of worse mischiefs, that there should be a supreme though fallible Authority, beyond which there might be no appeal: and as it is no injustice that there lies no appeal beyond the supreme Magistrate in civil affairs, though he be confessed to be fallible; so neither can it be any injustice, that there is no appeal beyond the supreme Ecclesiastical Judicatory in Church matters, though it be fallible, provided it be granted (which the Protestants with the Fathers do assert, and have proved) that such Judicatories do not bind the Conscience, but onely regulate the outward Acts, and prevent visible confusions.

§. 8. And the same answer will serve for *Bellarmines* second argument, which is this: *the Fathers and Councils teach, that they which do not acquiesce in the sentence of general Councils are Hereticks, & deserve excommunication, and therefore they thought such Councils could not erre.*

Answer 1. I deny the Consequence again for the now mentioned reason. The civil cutting off such as resist the sentence of the Magistrate, doth as fully prove the Magistrates infallibility, as the Ecclesiastical cutting off such as do not rest in the sentence of a Council doth prove the Councils infallibility. 2. The Fathers did not account men Hereticks, meerly because they rested not in the sentence of a Council as such, ( for then they

(a) *Faſtetur Baronius Concilium generale eſſe ſupremum in terris controverſiarum Judicem—determinativam & deciſivam poteſtatem agnoſcunt Adverſarii, cui omnes exterius obtemperare tenentur, ne ſchiſma fiat. S. Clara in ſystem. fidei c. 20 num. 14. & 15.*

(b) *Docent Patres & Concilia eſſe hæreticos & excommunicandos omnes qui non acquieſcunt Conciliis plenariis. Ex quo manifeſte ſequitur, eos putaffe Concilia non poſſe errare. Bellar. ubi ſuprà.*

should have been Hereticks for rejecting the *Arrian* Councils) but because the Doctrine which they opposed, and the Councils asserted was true; and so it was the verity of the Doctrine, not the Conciliarity (if you will pardon the word) of the sentence, by which they judged of Hereticks. That cannot be an Argument that the Fathers believed the infallibility of Councils, which is common to those that deny their Infallibility; but the calling of those Hereticks, who do not acquiesce in the sentence of Councils, is common to those that deny the infallibility of Councils; for the Protestants themselves have branded and censured, and sometimes put to death as Hereticks such men, as in fundamental points of Religion have receded from their publick Confessions of Faith, and the decrees of their Synods, without ever pretending to infallibility.

But, that I may improve the Cardinals Argument for him to the highest, Put case the Fathers had said that men were bound to believe all the Assertions of their general Council, yet this doth not evince that they thought them infallible: I prove it plainly thus. The Papists maintain that people are bound to believe their Pastours, and to receive all their Doctrines without examination or hesitation; according to that which *Stapleton* so largely and frequently defends, That Pastours are simply to be heard in all things) and yet they do not hold these Pastours to be infallible. So they tell us by vertue of that Text, *Matth. 23. 2.* the Jews were bound to believe all the Doctrines publicly taught by the Scribes and Pharisees, and yet they do not hold that the particular Scribes and Pharisees (of whom the Text speaks) were infallible. And the Fathers might justly say all men were bound to believe all the decrees of their Councils which were then past, not that they thought Councils were infallible, but because they judged all their de-  
crees



crees true and consonant to the Scripture: otherwise how little they valued the decrees of Councils, when they apprehended them repugnant to the holy Scripture, may be sufficiently understood by their contempt of the Arrian Councils.

3. There is in this Argument the same σφάλμα or error which runs through most of the Arguments and testimonies of the Fathers pretended in this cause, viz. they argue from the authority of Councils to their infallibility, and how invalid the consequence is appears from this undeniable argument. Masters, Magistrates, Parents, Bishops, and Provincial Councils, have Authority, but not infallibility. If all that the Fathers say to that purpose were put upon the Rack, it would prove nothing but this, that they thought (what the Protestants grant) that general Councils were the supreme Judicatories of the Church, from which was no appeal, and in which all men were obliged peaceably to acquiesce, but that doth not infer infallibility, as we have seen.

§. 9. Bellarmin's third argument is this, *The Fathers teach, that the decrees of general Councils are Divine, and from the Spirit of God; from whence followes, that they were not subject to error.* (a) And this he confirms by the testimony of *Constantine* (who, now he is Orthodox, is grown considerable, though when he was alledg'd against him, he was a greater Prince than Doctor, as we heard even now) *Greg. Nazianz.* *Cyril,* and *Leo*, who call the decrees of the Council of *Nice* divine, and say they were ordered by the spirit of God: and so say I too. And it is true of all the decrees of all Councils, (nay of all the Sermons of Ministers) which are collected from Scripture &

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(a) *Patres docent esse divina & à Spiritu sancto edita decreta generalium Conciliorum, Ergo, ubi suprà.*

conformable to it (such as the *Nicene* Decrees were) that they are Divine Oracles. But then their Divinity, and that which is the consequent of Divinity, Infallibility, ariseth not from the Authority decreeing them, which being but humane, could not make the Decrees divine, but from the matters of the Decrees which was taken out of Scripture, as *Bellarmino* confesseth (a), and therefore divine. But if *Bellarmino* thinks from this particular case to draw a general Conclusion, I must make bold to stop him in his career, till he hath told me whether he thinks this Argument solid. The Fathers held the Decrees of the Council of *Nice* to be divine, and (say it were) infallibly true; therefore they thought the Decrees of all Councils divine and infallible, and consequently the *Anti-Nicene* and *Arrian* Councils. If he can digest this; I will say he hath a Stomach as good as his Conscience is bad.

§. 10. I think it is time to take my leave of the Cardinal, and come to the Friar *S. Clara*, (who being an ingenuous person, and coming last, hath doubtless selected the best weapons) and his great Argument I find to be this: That the Fathers did generally own the infallibility of the Catholick Church, and consequently the infallibility of general Councils, which are the same with the Church, and their definitions are the Determinations of the Church: this he largely prosecutes cap. 20, 21, 22. For Answer, let me premise what I have proved, that if this were the opinion of the Fathers, yet seeing that they confess themselves to be men subject to like passions and mistakes with others, according to that of *Austin*, neither do you think, that because we are Bishops, we are not liable to irregular motions, but rather let us conceive that we live dan-

(a) *Concilium Nicenum cum definivit Filium Patri esse 'quoniam, consensionem deduxit ex Scripturis' de Conciliis lib. 2. c. 12.*

gerously amongst the snares of Temptations, because we are men (a). And seeing the Papists confess they have erred in many things, therefore this, if it were true, will afford no solid and sufficient foundation for their faith, but I shall forgive them that infirmity. The argument ( how- ever he glories much in it ) hath nothing sound from head to foot; how can they expect this argument should prevail with us, when it is rejected by themselves, who deny the consequence from the infallibility of the Church unto that of Councils. So doth *Cameracensis*, as *S. Clara* notes, in these words: *A general Council may erre in the faith, because if it should erre, yet it would remain that others without the Council did not erre, and by consequence that the faith of the Church did not fail* (b). The like faith *Panormitanus*: *A Council may erre, as it hath erred; nor doth this hinder it, that Christ prayed for his Church that it might not erre, because, although a general Council represent the whole Church, yet in truth it is not the whole Church: — All the Faithful constitute that Church whose Head and Husband Christ is, and that is the Church which cannot erre* (c). The very same thing, and almost in the same words, faith *Antonius* (d), where he adds an instance, *That the saying of Jerome was preferred before the decree of a Council*. Thus you see the consequence is de-

(a) *Nec arbitreris ideo nobis non posse subrepere injustam commotionem. quia Episcopi sumus, sed potius cogitemus inter laqueos temptationum nos periculosissime vivere, quia homines sumus. Epistola 79.*

(b) *Concilium generale potest contra fidem errare, quia ipso sic errante adhuc staret aliquos extra Concilium non errare, & per consequens fidem Ecclesie non deficere. art. 3. in questione vespertiarum assert. 8.*

(c) *Concilium non potest errare, quia Christus oravit pro Ecclesia sua ut non deficeret: Quia dico, quod licet Concilium generale representet totam Ecclesiam universalem, non tamen est illa Ecclesia cujus caput & sponsus est ipse Christus, & ista est illa Ecclesia quae errare non potest. super part. 1. Decret. fol. 142.*

(d) *In summa part. 3. tit. 22. c. 2. de Conciliis generalibus, sect. 6.*

nied by three Famous Authors of their own. Nay, what say you, if S. *Clara* himself deny the Consequence? I am greatly mistaken, if it doth not follow from hence, that he makes Councils infallible no further than they are afterwards received and owned by the Church, and allowes them to be fallible where that reception doth not follow, as we shall see hereafter; and therefore the infallibility is fixed in the Catholick Church, not in the Council, and consequently the Church may be infallible, and yet the Council remain fallible: as those Papists that assert Councils to have their infallibility from the Pope, ( which *Bellarmino* and the Jesuites generally do ) confess Councils, without the Popes confirmation and in themselves, to be but fallible: for what the Popes confirmation is in *Bellarmino*'s opinion, that the Churches reception is in the judgment of S. *Clara*, and all the Authors he cites to that purpose. What say you further, if S. *Clara* confess the falsehood of his own Conclusion? let the intelligent Reader judg. His Conclusion is, Therefore Councils are infallible in the judgment of the Fathers; and of all the Fathers he tels us St. *Austin* is the greatest Assertor of the infallibility of Councils: now I assume, S. *Austin* in the judgment of S. *Clara* held, that Councils are fallible. This I prove from his own words: *In this sense* Occham rightly delivers the mind of *Austin*: whether they be Popes or others, whether they wrot any thing in Council or out of Council, the same judgment is to be passed upon them, that things are not therefore to be reputed infallibly true & certain because they wrot so, but only because they could prove it by Scriptures or reason, or miracles, or the approbation of the Universal Church. Thus far Occham. Now follows S. *Clara*'s *Veritas*: which doctrine of his I judge most safe, and that it is owned by almost all Catholicks (a).

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(a) *Denique in hoc sensu bene dicit Occhamus de mente Augustini,*  
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The evidence of this place forced *S. Clara* to make this acknowledgment. that it seems to favour the opinion of those who asserted the Fallibility of Councils in lesser things, (though indeed this is but a figment of his own brain, and a distinction foisted into the Text, which *St. Austin* never dream'd of) and he is reduced to such straits, that he hath no other way to evade, but instead of an Answer to oppose one Argument against another, viz. that it is sufficient for him, that the Fathers call those Hereticks, that do not adhere to the definitions of Councils, *Ergo* they thought them infallible: It is *Bellarmino's* argument and I have already answer'd it. And so this Block being removed, the Conclusion remains firm, that *St. Austin* thought not Councils infallible. For farther confirmation whereof, I shall from hence collect two Arguments, plainly proving, that *St. Austin* was not of the judgment of the Romanists in this point of the infallibility of Councils.

1. Because no more infallibility is here granted to general Councils than to particular Synods, nay than to private Doctors. This I prove, because *St. Austin*, and the Papists themselves, and indeed all men allow each of them so far infallible, and their assertions to be infallibly true, as they can prove them by Scripture, or irrefragable reason, or miracles, or the approbation of the whole Church: and not one syllable more doth *Austin* give to general Councils.

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*quam ibi refert. 3. Dialog. tract. 1. lib. 3. c. 24. Sive fuerint summi Pontifices, sive alii, sive scripserint aliquid in Concilio generali, sive extra, consimile de iis iudicium est habendum, ut in iis quæ scientiæ vel juris sunt, non ideo aliquid putetur certitudinaliter modo prædicto (scil. infallibili) esse verum, quia ipsi ita scripserunt, nisi id vel per Scripturam divinam, vel rationes irrefragabiles, aut operationem miraculorum, aut per approbationem universalis Ecclesiæ persuadere voluerint. Sic Occamus: Quam eius sententiam tutissimam æstimo, & ab omnibus sævè Catholicis amplectam. Syst. em. fidei c. 26. num. 2.*

2 Because the Papists will not, and cannot according to their principles, truly speak what St. *Austin* there speaks; and therefore St. *Austin* did not think as they think ( unless they will make him one of those, who seldom speak as they think ) It is the known and avowed Doctrine of the Romish Church, ( however disowned by some of them, whom they look on as Extravagants and Schismatics, ) that we are bound to believe the Doctrine of the Pope, say some, of the Council say others, of the Pope and Council together say almost all, upon the credit of their own assertion, without any further reason. This is evident from Stapleton <sup>a</sup>, Gregory de Valentia <sup>b</sup>, Tannerus <sup>c</sup>, and Bellarmine in several places, one I shall instance in. *It is one thing ( saith he ) to interpret a Law as a Doctor, ( that requires learning ) another thing to interpret it as a Judge, ( that requires Authority : ( a Doctor propounds not his opinion as necessary to be followed, farther than reason induceth us ; but a Judge propounds his opinion with a necessity of following it. The Fathers expound Scripture as Doctors or Lawyers, but the Pope and Councils as Judges or Princes d. And now let S. Clara himself judge, if he will deal candidly, whether S. Austin and Bellarmine were of a mind, or ( which is all one ) whether St. Austin did receive the Decrees of Councils as of Judges and Princes, barely upon the credit of their authority or assertion, as the Papists say he did, or only*

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(a) *Contra Whitak. in variis locis.* (b) *Lib. 8. Anal. fid.* (c) *In colloquio Ratisbonensi. ses. 9.* (d) *Aliud est interpretari legem more Doctoris, aliud more Judicis: ad explicationem more Doctoris requiritur eruditio, ad explicationem more Judicis requiritur auctoritas. Doctor enim non proponit suam sententiam ut necessario sequendam, sed solum quatenus ratio suadet; at Judex proponit ut sequendum necessario. — Augustinus & ceteri Patres in Commentariis sungebantur officio Doctorum, at Concilia & Pontifices funguntur officio Judicis. De verbi Dei interpretatione lib. 3. c. 10. vresus finem.*

as Doctors, because they could prove what they say from Scripture or reason, as St. *Austin* in *terminis* asserts.

§. 11. But because it is of some concernment to understand *Austins* mind in this point, (whose authority is so venerable both to them and us, and whom both parties willingly admit for Umpire in this controversy) I shall further consider what S. *Clara* alledgeth from him for this purpose, The passage he pleads is this: *Until that which was wholsomely believed, was confirmed, & all doubts removed by a general Council* (a): *Therefore saith S. Clara it is not lawfal to doubt after the definitions of Councils* (b) Put it into a Syllogism, and it is this, That which so confirms a Truth, as to remove all doubts, is infallible: but a general Council so confirms a truth, as to remove all doubts, *Ergo*. The Major is denied: for a private Minister may by the evidence of Scripture or Reason so confirm a truth, as to remove all doubts from the hearers, and yet is not therefore infallible. There are then two ways, whereby doubts may be removed, 1. By the infallibility of the Authority: Thus when God tells me that which seems improbable to reason, this should remove all doubt. 2. By the evidence of Arguments, and so their argument proceeds *à genere ad speciem affirmativè*, thus a general Council removeth doubts, *ergo* they do it by the infallibility of their Authority, it followeth not, for you see they may do it by the evidence of their argument. And this Answer might very well suffice: But that I may give them full satisfaction (if possibly the interest of these men would suffer their consciences to open their eyes) I shall prove that it was so, and that S. *Austin* speaks of this latter way of removing doubts, *i. e.* by their con-

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(a) *Donec plenario totius orbis Concilio quod saluberrimè sentiebatur, etiam remotis dubitationibus firmaretur. lib. 1. con. Donatistas c. 7.*

(b) *Non licet igitur dubitare post definitiones Conciliares.*

vincing arguments, not by their infallible authority. This plainly appears by considering the contexture of the words: *Left I should seem, saith he, only to prove it by humane Arguments, because the obscurity of this question did in former times, before the schism of Donatus, make great and worthy Bishops and Provincial Councils differ among themselves, until by a general Council, that which was wholsomly believed was confirmed, and all doubts removed, I shall bring out of the Gospel infallible arguments.* (a.) Where you plainly see, that he calls the Authority of Councils but a Humane argument and Authority, and that he acknowledgeth none but Scripture arguments to be certain or infallible, as is evident from the Antithesis.

2. This appears most undeniably from a parallel place, where St. Austin speaks thus of Cyprian: *That holy man sufficiently shewed, that he would have changed his opinion, if any had demonstrated to him that Baptism might be so given, &c.* (a.) And a little after, he would have yielded to a general Council, *if the truth of that question had in his time been evidenced, and declared, and confirmed by a general Council.* (c.) And he gives the reason of his yielding, *Because that holy Soul would have yielded even to one man declaring and demonstrating the Truth* (d.)—much more to

(a) *Jam enim nē videar humanis argumentis id agere, quoniam questionis hujus obscuritas prioribus Ecclesie temporibus ante schisma Donati—patres Episcopos ita inter se compulsi salvā pace disceptare ac fluctuare, ut diu Conciliorum in suis quibusque regionibus diversa statuta nuterent, donec plenario totius orbis Concilio, quod saluberrimū sentiebatur, etiam remotis dubitationibus firmaretur, ex Evangelio profero certa documenta.* l. i. con. Donatum. c. 7. (b) *Satis ostendit se facillimē correcturum fuisse sententiam suam, si quis demonstraret baptismum Christi sic dari posse.* Et paulō post. (c) *Si jam illō tempore questionis hujus veritas eliquata & declarata per plenarium Concilium solidaretur; & postea,* (d) *Quia profecto & unū verum dicentis & demonstranti possit facillimē consentire tam sancta anima.* lib. 2. con. Don. c. 3.



a general Council. In all which it is plain, that it was not any presumed infallibility of the Council, but the clearness of the truth, and the strength of their arguments which would have satisfied Cyprian in S. Austins judgment. 3. This may be irrefragably proved from hence, that St. Austin makes this the peculiar property of the holy Scripture (by which it is distinguished from, and advanced above all the opinions, decrees, or writings of all Bishops in or out of Councils) that we may not doubt of any thing contained in it. The words are express, and brought in with a *Quis nesciat*. Who knows not that the holy Scripture is so preferred before all the Letters of after-Bishops, that we may not so much as doubt or debate concerning any thing contained in them, whether it be true or no. But the Letters of the Bishops may be reprov'd by Councils, if they swerve from the truth: and Provincial Councils must yield to General Councils, and former general Councils are oft corrected by the latter (a): where there is a gradation from Bishops to Provincial, and thence to General Councils, but all of them are in this respect postposed to the Scripture, that we may lawfully doubt of any thing contained in their Decrees, and where they swerve from the truth, reject it. And nothing more evinceth the strength of this argument, than the silliness of our Adversaries evasions: He speaks of questions of Fact and Ceremony, not of Faith, saith Bellarmine and Scapleton, whereas the question there disputed was, whether persons Baptised by

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(a) *Quis nesciat sanctam Scripturam—omnibus posteriorum Episcoporum literis ita præponi, ut de illa omnino dubitari aut disceptari non possit; utrum verum vel certum sit, quicquid in ea scriptum esse constiterit. Episcoporum autem literas—per Concilia licere reprehendi, si quid in iis sorte à veritate deviatum est: & Concilia—per Provincias plenariorum Conciliorum auctoritati cedere & ipsa plenaria sæpe priora posterioribus emendari. lib. 2. contra Donatistas c. 3.*

Hereticks should be rebaptized, which the Fathers formerly made, and the Papists now make a question of Faith. *But by emendantur (saith Stapleton) he means perfectius explicantur.* If you ask in what Dictionary or Author the word *emendantur* is so taken, you must understand that it follows *à majori ad minus*: that if our Romish Masters may coin new Articles of Faith, which diverse Papists profess they may, much more may they devise new significations of words. But I would know of these Doctors what they would think, or at least what discreet and sober men would think of that Author that should say, *Libri Moysi à Prophetis emendantur*, or *Scripta Prophetarum ab Apostolis emendantur*: and yet if *Stapletons* Lexicon may be used, it were an harmless expression. But if these men will give *St. Austin* leave to be the interpreter of his own words, he hath sufficiently open'd his mind, by making *emendare* and *reprehendere* parallel expressions, and by speaking of such an Emendation as follows after, or is conjoined with a doubting of the truth of what was delivered by the Council. This may serve for the third Proposition.

§. 12. And here I might give my self a *superseedeas*, having shewed the inbecillity of their principal Proofs from the Fathers; but *ex abundanti* I shall add the fourth Proposition, which is this; That it doth appear the Antients did believe the fallibility of Councils. The former proposition shewed, that they could not prove their Assertion, and this I hope will disprove it. But because what hath been already said may serve for that end also, I shall be the briefer in this, and shall only mention three arguments to prove it.

1. They who make Scripture proof necessary to command the belief of Doctrines or matters of Religion, do not hold the infallibility of Councils; but so did the Fathers: *Ergo.* The Major is evident from hence: because

cause one infallible Authority is sufficient, and the addition of another, though it may tend *ad melius esse*, yet it cannot be necessary *ad esse* ( for then the former were not sufficient ) And the Papists, who believe the infallibility of Popes or Councils, do profess *eo nomine* that Scripture proof is not necessary, & that the Churches authority without Scripture-evidence is sufficient. When Whitaker urged the necessity of Scripture-proof to shew the Church, for proof of the Scriptures prerogative above the Church, Stapleton roundly answers, *that such proof is not necessary to a Christian man, and a believer.* For the Minor, that the Fathers did judge Scripture-proof necessary, hath been already shewed, and will hereafter be made good; and to prevent tedious repetitions I shall now forbear it.

2. They who allow the people liberty of examination of all that any men, since the Apostles, say, do not believe the infallibility of Councils: but so do the Fathers. The major is evident from the confession and practice of our Adversaries, who believing the infallibility of the Pope or Councils, do enjoin the reception of their Decrees and injunctions without examination. *A Christian ought to receive the Churches doctrine without examination*, saith Bellarmine. The Minor hath been proved from the expresse words of the Fathers.

3. They that derogate Faith from all men without exception, besides the Apostles, do not hold the infallibility of Councils: but so do the Fathers, *Ergo*. The Major needs no proof: for the Councils are made up of men, and such too as are confessed to be each of them

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(a) *Homini Christiano & Catholico*——*hujusmodi probatio necessaria non est. De Author. Scriptura lib. 3. c. 1. in fine.*

(b) *Debet Christianus sine examine recipere doctrinam Ecclesie. Bell. ubi supra.*

fallible: Nor do they pretend to any Enthusiasm, or immediate revelation. The Minor also hath been fully proved: to which I shall add one out of *Austin*: *If it be confirmed by authority of Scripture, we are to believe it without all doubting; but for other witnesses, or their testimonies, a man may believe, or not believe, as he apprehends what they say hath weight or not* (a). It is true, *S. Clara* says, that *S. Austin* doth not only prefer Scripture before particular Authors (b): which, how false it is, sufficiently appears from the other testimony of *Austins*, which I have even now discussed, wherein you plainly saw in *Occham's* and *St. Clara's* own judgment, *St. Austin* positively took away all difference between Councils and private Doctors in this particular, and equally denied all *ᾠτονομία* to both of them. Thus I hope I have sufficiently proved what I undertook concerning the supposed Tradition and the testimony of the Fathers, in reference to the infallibility of Councils. This is the first Branch; the infallibility of Councils is not made known to us by Tradition: the next Proposition must shew, That it is not revealed in Scripture.

§. 13. This therefore is the second Branch, That the infallibility of Councils hath no Foundation in Scripture.

1. I might justly insist upon what hath been already mentioned concerning the Doctrine of the Romanists about the insignificancy and insufficiency of the Scrip-

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(a). *Si Divinarum Scripturarum*——*perspicua firmetur autoritate, sine ulla dubitatione credendum est. Aliis vero testibus vel testimoniis, quibus aliquid credendum esse suadetur, tibi credere vel non credere liceat, quantum ea momenti ad faciendam fidem habere vel non habere portenderis.* Epif. 112.

(a). *Dico Augustinum hic solum præferre Scripturas particularibus authoribus.* System. fid. ubi suprà.

ture to ground my faith without the Churches Authority. And surely they that profess they are not bound to believe the Divinity of Christ, were it not for the testimony and interpretation of the Church, *i. e.* the Pope, or a Council (which is their assertion) must needs give us the same liberty to assert, that a Christian is not bound to believe what the Scripture saith concerning the infallibility of the Pope or Councils, but for the testimony of the Pope and Councils, that is, we have no reason to believe their infallibility, but this, that they tell us they are infallible, we have their word for it; so it seems the Disciple is better than his Master, and the Pope's word will go further than the word of God: for the Scriptures Testimony is not to be credited in its own cause, saith *Bellarmino* <sup>2</sup>, as the Churches testimony is. When the Papists would press the Scripture to the service of this notion, it may say to them, as *Jephthah* did to the Elders of Israel, *Jud. 11. 7. Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my mothers house, and why are you come unto me now, when ye are in distress? And upon condition they will reply with the Gileadites, Therefore we turn again to thee now that thou mayest be our head. I will overlook that otherwise unpardonable fault, (by which they have rendred the Scripture unserviceable to their purpose) and once more they shall have a fair tryal, whether the infallibility of Councils can be demonstrated from Scripture.*

§. 14. The first and principal support of infallibility is *1 Tim. 3. 15.* where the Church is called the *Pillar and ground of Truth*. This is the *Ajaxis Clypeus*, which you shall find used upon all occasions, and infi-

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(a) *Etiam si Scriptura dicat libros Prophetarum & Apostolorum esse divinos, tamen non credam esse, nisi prius id credidero, Scripturam que hoc dicit, esse divinam. Nam in Alcorano Mahumetis passim legimus ipsum Alcoranum de celo à Deo missum.*

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nately repeated by every impertinent scribler of the Romish party.

For answer, to pass over that notion of our acute *Chillingworth*, that it is not the Church, but *Timothy*, who is there called the ground and pillar of Truth, and so there is only an Ellipsis of the word  $\omega\varsigma$ , which is very frequent,  $\varsigma\lambda\lambda\theta$  for  $\omega\varsigma \varsigma\lambda\lambda\theta$ , or of the word  $\omega\varsigma$ ,  $\varsigma\lambda\lambda\theta$  for  $\varsigma\lambda\lambda\theta \omega\varsigma$ , as the learned *Gataker* observes, & there are divers instances of either of them. So the sence is, *that thou mightest behave thy self in the House of God, the Church, as a Pillar, or as becomes a Pillar.* And he gives this notable reason for it, because it was heterogeneous to call that Church a Pillar, which in the same verse he had called an House. And this I am sure would puzzle our Masters to answer. But to wave that, I answer

1. The Church spoken of is not the Church of *Rome*, but the Church in which *Timothy* was placed. And whether it be spoken of the Church in general or in particular, what is this to *Rome*? Here we find a notable piece of the Roman mystery of iniquity. If there be any Reproofs or Censures applied to any other Churches, there every Church must bear its own burthen: But if any Church be honoured in Scripture with Commendations, Promises, Priviledges, That presently belongs to *Rome*, and they have a Commission to seize it for their own use; but how unjustly, we shall here discover. For if you understand these words of the Catholick Church, or of the Church in general, then the words only prove the indefectibility of the whole Church, which may consist with the error and Apostacy of several, which then were eminent Churches, whereof we have unquestionable instances in the glorious Churches of *Asia*, which notwithstanding this promise fell away: and consequently *Rome*, though then her faith was famous throughout the World, might fall with them or after them

them. And if you understand the words of a particular Church, they must be understood of that Church in which *Timothy* was placed. And if my memory fail me not exceedingly, that was not *Rome* but *Ephesus*, which notwithstanding this character did fall away. And moreover it was not the Church ruling, but the Church ruled, in and over which *Timothy* was set, which is here called the pillar and ground of Truth. And so the Argument runs thus: The Church and People of *Ephesus* are the pillar and ground of Truth: therefore the Pope of *Rome* is infallible. The consequence is thus proved: the Pope may interpret Scripture as he pleaseth, and though he may erre in the premises, as *Stapleton* confesseth (a), yet he is alwaies infallible in the conclusion, as the same *Stapleton* asserts: Ergo the Popes infallibility is out of the reach of all Arguments.

2. The term of *Pillar* notes the Solidity, but not the infallibility of the Church; it notes the difficulty of its removal, but not the impossibility. Every stout Champion of Gods truth is a Pillar of the Truth, and such are frequently called by that name in the Fathers, but yet they are not infallible. *Athanasius* was a Pillar of the truth, but not infallible. The great *Osins* a Pillar of the truth and *Nicene* Faith, yet fell foully, as appears by the story. *Musonius*, Bishop of *Neocæsarea*, is by *Basilius Casariensis* invested with this very title of *σῦλος καὶ ἐδρυῖς* *μὴ ἀλυσθείας*, Ergo by the Roman Logick *Basil* thought him infallible, or if he did not, then *Basil* did not think those words implied infallibility. *Gregory Nyssen* tells us, not only Peter, & James, and John are pillars, not only John Baptist is a Light, but also all that build up the Church are Pillars and lights. Therefore it seems all Ministers are

(a) In relectione Principiorum fidei. controu. 4. qu. 2.

(b) In Epist. 63.

(c) In vita Mosis.

infallible : Male-children are called *σύλοι οἰκῶν*, the pillars of their Families, among the Greek Poets; and *Geta*, a faithful servant in *Terence*, is called *Columen Familia*, the pillar of the Family : For ought I know, if those men would go to *Rome*, and upon the credit of this word sue out a writ of priviledge, they might be as infallible as the Pope himself.

3. This Phrase, *The Church is the Pillar of Truth*, may note the Churches duty, not her practice, and what she ought to be, not what she alwaies is. They shall not say this is *gratis dictum*, I will make it good by parallel instances, wherein they shall see the absurdity of their argument. *Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil*, Rom. 13. 3. If this argument be good, the Church is a Pillar, &c. she cannot erre, then this also is good, that Rulers cannot be a terror to good works. None but one that comes from *Bedlam* would assert the latter, & none but one that comes from *Rome* would conclude the former. Thus our Saviour saith of his Ministers, *Ye are the salt of the world, ye are the light of the world*, Math 5. *Ergo* by this argument, this Salt cannot loose its savour, and no Minister can be in the dark, but every one must be infallible. Thus *Prov. 16. 10. A Divine sentence is in the lips of the King, his mouth transgresseth not in judgment*, *Ergo* Kings are infallible. If the Pope had such a Text in the New Testament, *The Popes mouth transgresseth not in judgment*, you may easily imagine what triumphs the assertors of infallibility would have made, who can build a trowing confidence upon such pittiful foundations; and yet this doth not inform us of the practice of Kings, but acquaints them with their duty, as interpreters agree.

4. This Phrase (the Pillar and ground of Truth) notes the necessity of the Churches ministry, *quoad nos*; but not the infallibility of her Authority: these are two distinct things, and the one no way consequent upon the other:

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The utmost which can be squeez'd from that phrase is this, that the Church doth support the truth and Gospel of Christ in the world, and so doth every sincere zealous defender of the truth, and especially the Ministers and prime champions of the Truth, not only when met together in a general Council, but also in their single capacities, which I think will be undeniably proved by this Argument- *The Church was the pillar and ground of truth* for the first three hundred years after Christ and the Apostles, never did it more deserve that name, nor did it ever more discharge that office; but all that time there was no œcumenical Council (and that is the only Council to whom infallibility is ascribed by the Papists) therefore either that phrase doth not evince infallibility, or the several Pastors of those Ages were infallible.

5. The consequence of the argument is false and frivolous; The Church is the pillar of truth, *Ergo* she is infallible: for the same Church may be a pillar of truth & a seat of Error. For what is it to be a pillar of the Truth, (if we draw aside the curtain of the Metaphor) but to be a *defender of the Faith*? And who knows not that the same persons may defend the Truth and maintain errors with them, unless he be one that never read the Bible, nor Ecclesiastical History? Who knows not that the same persons, which defended the truth of Christianity against Jews and Pagans, did also maintain the Doctrine of *Jesabel*, and the Heresie of the *Nicolaitans*? *Rev. 2.* and that those very men that owned the Foundation, did build the hay and stubble of false doctrines thereupon, *1 Cor 3.* and that diverse of the stoutest defenders of the truth of the Gospel among the Fathers had their errors, as *Bellarmino* acknowledgeth? Else, if they will stand to the consequence, it will follow by the virtue of it, such a Minister preacheth the truth, *Ergo* he is infallible, and cannot preach false doctrine. Such a Judg is the pillar of

Justice in the land; *Ergo* it is impossible he should make an unjust decree. Proclamations are hanged upon such a pillar, *Ergo* a Libel cannot be fastned there.

6. Their Argument proceeds from a declaration of the Churches present state, ( for that is all that place asserts, *viz.* that the Church then was a Church and pillar of Truth ) to an assurance of its perpetual continuance in that state, which is quite another thing. Which kind of argumentation, if it might pass for current, it would work brave exploits: for then it would follow, The citie of Sion was an *habitation of righteousness*, a pillar of truth and justice; *Ergo* the prophet *Esay* was mis-inform'd, when he said, *The Faithful City is become an Harlot, it was full of judgment, righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers*, *Isa.* 1. 12. Nay then the Church of *England* is Orthodox in the Roman sence. *Probatur.* It was the pillar of truth. *viz.* when it was the Pope's As, *Ergo* it is so still, and the Papiſts slander us, when they say we are fallen away. The Church was a Virgin in the Apostles dayes, saith *Egesippus*. *Ergo* she is not now corrupted, nor indeed can be: For I must tell you, the Pope can do more than all the Apostles either pretended or did; for they could not even while they lived wholly keep the Church from actual corruption, but the Pope keeps her from all possibility of corruption. Thus the Pope is omnipotent, and it is no marvel he is infallible.

§. 15. The second place of principal moment alledged for the infallibility of the Church and Councils is *Matth.* 18. 17. where all are commanded to *hear the Church, and they that hear her not, are to be accounted as Heathens and Publicans*: *Ergo* the Church of *Rome* is infallible. For this is the comfort, whatever is in the premises, *Romes* infallibility is in the Conclusion; and the Church of *Rome*, that can dispence with God's lawes

lawes. (a) may well dispence with Syllogistical, rules by which there ought not to be more *in the conclusion than in the premises*, but that Law was made for Subjects, but not for our Sovereign Lord the Pope. To this may be added another place they vehemently urge, *Luk. 10. 16. He that heareth you, heareth me, Ergo* the Church is infallible.

*Ans. 2.* Whatever these texts prove, what right hath the Church of *Rome* to her monopolie of the priviledges here conveyed? or why may not the Greek or English Churches and their Ministers claim the benefit of them? The words have an indifferent aspect to all of them.

2. The consequence is false, Christians must hear the Church and Ministers, *Ergo* they are infallible: which I thus prove. Children must obey their Parents, and if they do not, they must dye for it, *Deut. 21.* are Parents therefore infallible? Subjects must obey their Magistrates or dye for it, *Jos. 1. 18. Whosoever will not hearken unto thy words, he shall be put to death:* it seems then Magistrates are infallible. For this is the Argument by which the Romanists pretend to prove the infallibility of the High-priest of the Jewes, because they that would not hear him, were to be put to death, *Deut. 17.* Nay this very text *Luk. 10.* destroyes that sense which the Romanists would fasten upon it: For seeing it is not the Apostles but seventy Disciples, and they too not as met in a Council, but preaching the Gospel severally, or ( at most ) by pairs, whom they are, under such dreadful penalties, commanded to hear, if it be conclusive for infallibility, it proves the infallibility of every Minister, or at least of every pair of them.

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(a) *Secundum plenitudinem potestatis de jure supra jus possumus dispensare* ait Innocent .3. in decret. de concess. Præbend. tit. 8. c. proposuit. & addit Glossator, Nam contra Apostolum dispensat; item contra vetus Testamentum.

3. It is agreed between them and us, that Christ speaks of the Censures of the Church *Mat. 18.* and therefore surely, if it prove the Churches infallibility in any thing, it must be in the matter there spoken of, *viz.* in Church censures: But they grant the Church is Fallible in her censures, as depending upon Testimony and matters of Fact: and therefore it is ridiculous to infer from thence her infallibility in other things which are not spoken of in this place.

4. The Church and Ministers are to be heard, not simply and in all things, but only in the Lord, and what they speak, according to his words: This is denied by the Papists, who positively assert, that they are to be heard in all things, & without examination, as we have seen from their own words. It is therefore necessary to say something to overthrow this lawless liberty and boundless authority ascribed by them to the Church, for this is their *πεῖσμα* *ἑαυτοῦ*, or one of their radical mistakes.

1. That which Christ denies to the Apostles is not to be ascribed to the Church: But Christ denies this absolute Authority to the Apostles *Matth. 23. 10.* *Be ye not called Masters, for one is your Master even Christ*, where it is not the Name, but Thing which is prohibited, even *magisterium fidei*, or the usurpation of an absolute authority in Teachers, and the exaction of an universal belief and blind obedience in hearers, which was the error of the Pharisees here condemned by our Saviour, for so they said: *You are to believe all the sayings of our Rabbins in their Homilies no less than the Law of Moses:* And again, *all their words are the very words of God*, are their expressions in the *Thalmud*. It cannot be denied that Christ derogates that Authority from the Apostles, which he ascribes to himself; but if the popish opinion were true, the Apostles had as great Authority as Christ himself,  
for

for the height of Christs authority is expressed in these words (nor can more be said of God himself) *him shall ye hear in all things. Act. 3. 22.* This indeed the popish Doctors most blasphemously arrogate to themselves (as you have seen) but so did not the Apostles, they had not so learned Christ, they alwaies observed their distance: *Be followers of us as we are of Christ. I have received of the Lord that which I delivered.* St. Paul denies that he had dominion over their Faith, *2 Cor. 1. 24. Not that we have dominion over your Faith.* He warrant you Paul denied it to himself, because it was *Peters* prerogative; for it is certain St. *Peters* Successors challenge it, for Dominion and Subjection are Relatives. And if the people owe an absolute subjection of their Faith to their Teachers, the Teachers have an absolute Dominion over the Faith of the people. In short, this sottish Doctrine of an implicit Faith must needs be Apocryphal, so long as the Epistle to the Galathians is canonical, and especially *Gai. 1. 8. Though we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel—let him be accursed:* And he is not contented with a single assertion, but adds, *As we said before, so say I now again—let him be accursed:* Which if the Reader compare with that abominable passage of *Bellarmines*, if the Pope should erre in commanding Vices and forbidding Virtues, the Church were bound to believe vices to be good, and virtues to be evil (a), he will be able to judge whether the Faith of the present Romish Church be the same with that of the Apostles dayes, or not: and whether they who are so liberal in dispensing their Anathemas to all that differ from their sentiments, do not justly fall under the Anathema here denounced.

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(a) Si Papa erraret præcipiendo vitia & prohibendo virtutes, tentetur Ecclesia credere vitia esse bona & virtutes malas. De Romano Pontifice. lib. 4. cap. 5. in fine.

2. If Pastors are to be heard in all things, then people cannot sin in obeying their Pastours, (else they should sin in doing their duty,) but people may sin in obeying their Pastours. Me thinks this should need no proof, but I find this to be the temper of our Adversaries, they who give the hardest measure to us, expect the highest measure from us, and they of whom we may say (as *Galen* did of *Moses*) *multa dicunt, nihil probant*, they say much, and prove nothing; will yeild us nothing, but what we must win by dint of Argument.

Therefore I shall prove it briefly. The Jewes sinned in following *Aarons* Doctrine: *these be thy Gods, O Israel*. So the prophet *Jeremy* frequently condemns them for obeying the Decrees of their Priests in his time. And our Saviour hath put it out of doubt, speaking of the Jewish Teachers, *Math. 15. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the Ditch*. And *St. Peter* assures us, (if his Successors will please to give him credit) that the Jewes were guilty of a great sinne in Christs death, though they did it in obedience to the Decrees of their Rulers. *Acts 3. 14, 17.*

2. If people are allowed to examine the Doctrines of Teachers by the Word ere they receive them, then they are not to be heard in all things: but people are allowed so to examine. — All the doubt lies about the Minor; and yet who can doubt of that, who ever read these following places. *Take heed that no man deceive you, for many shall come in my name, Matt. 24. 4, 5. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good, 1 Thes. 5. 21. Prove the Spirit, 1 John 4. 1.* It is true *Bellarmino* faith, *These precepts belong only to Learned men* (a). And *Gretserus*

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(a) *Prædicta mandata non ad omnes, sed ad solos Doctores pertinent: De verbi Dei interpretatione, lib. 3. c. 10.*

gives this reason for it, *because the unlearned people are not able to examine* (a). Very good, it seems then, none but the Learned can have their senses exercised to discern between good and evil, *Heb 5. 14.* And it is the priviledge of shepherds only, which Christ made the Character of all his sheep, *that they know his voice, and could distinguish it from the voice of Strangers, Joh 10. 4. 5.* It seems Christ spoke to the Learned only, when he said, *Search the Scripture, Joh. 5. 39.* It seems the learned *Thessalonians* only were bound to hold fast that which is good, for that goes with their proving, and proving was in order to holding fast. It seems the *Bereans* (whom *Paul* commends for examining his doctrine by the Scriptures, *Act. 17.*) were Masters of Arts, and *Berea* was an University, and *ἐκτενέως* implies that they had Academical education; and the Apostle meant it only of the University, when he writ to the City of *Corinth, I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say, 1 Cor. 10. 15.* Nay, the mischief is, if this be granted, their work is not done: for if the learned may examine, that is sufficient for our purpose, for such are many Lay-men (as they are called,) and diverse of the Clergy, who have no share in the Churches government, and therefore are as much bound to subjection as any of the people: and consequently the Rulers are not simply to be obeyed, nor their doctrine blindly received upon their own credit. But (saith *Bellarmino*) *indeed doubtful doctrines are to be examined, but the doctrine of lawful Ministers is not doubtful, but openly good* (b). I see the Cardinal intended to shew his wisdom, reserving the

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(a) Cum peritia probandi omnes spiritus superat vulgi captum, preceptum hoc plebeiis minime dictum est. *Gretserus in defens.*

(a) Agitur de Doctrina dubia, nam illa sola indiget probatione: Doctrina autem legitimorum propositorum non est dubia, sed aperte bona: ubi supra.

discovery of his Honesty to another time: Bellarmine was resolved to take a Post, which he might be sure to keep; he knew the Hereticks would be nibbling about the premises, and therefore he leaves the guarding of them to others, and resolves to hold the Conclusion, ( which he knew was not good manners to deny. ) But if such doctrine as our teachers deliver be *eo nomine* evidently good and true, then these commands of trying are both dangerous ( seeing they suppose and allow of doubts ) and frustraneous, ( since I may safely receive them without tryal. )

§. 16. A third place alleged for the Infallibility of the Church and Councils is Joh. 16. 3. *When the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.* Hence Bellarmine thus argues: *Christ speaks not of the Apostles only, but of their Successors, because he saith, the Comforter shall abide with you for ever, ch. 14. 16. i. e. with them and their Successors for ever. But Christ doth not lead the Bishops severally considered into all truth, therefore he leads them into truth when they are gathered together; and seeing their is no greater Chair in the Church, by which God teacheth us, than the Pope, when a Council is added to him, if his Chair should erre, how this promise is true [ he will teach you all truth, ] I see not.* That may be too: Bernardus non videt omnia, and why should Robertus do it.

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(a) *Alter locus est Joh. 16. Spiritus veritatis docebit vos omnem veritatem. Et ne putemus hoc dici solis Apostolis & non etiam successoribus. Cap. 14. aperte — Dominus testatur spiritum sanctum mansurum cum Apostolis in ternum, i. cum eis & cum successoribus perpetuo. At Episcopos seorsim existentes non docet spiritus sanctus omnem veritatem, ergo saltem Episcopos omnes in unum congregatos docebit omnem veritatem: & sane cum non sit in Ecclesia major aliqua Cathedra, per quam Deus nos doceat, quam summi Pontificis Cathedra, adjuncto consensu generalis Concilii, si hæc etiam Cathedra falli potest cum universam Ecclesiam docet, nescio quomodo vera sit illa promissio, Docebit vos omnem veritatem: De Concil. autoritate. lib. 2. c. 2.*



Ans. 1. These words, if extended beyond the Apostles, do not imply any infallibility, or if they do, a man may with as great colour deduce the infallibility, nay the omniscieny of all Believers, from 1 Joh. 2. 20. *Ye have an unction from the holy one, and ye know all things:* and v. 27. *the same anointing teacheth you all things.* All truth in the text is only meant of all truths necessary to salvation ( nothing being more familiar in Scripture-use, than for general expressions, as *all men, every creature, &c.* to be understood with tacit limitations ) nor are all whom God leads into truth, infallibly led into it, unless they will make all sincere Christians infallible; for such are led by the Spirit into truth, but not all in the same manner and degree, as the Apostles were. So the Popish argument proceeds *a genere ad speciem affirmativè*: They are led into truth, *ergo* they are infallibly led.

2. There is nothing in that text *Joh. 16.* to shew the extent of that promise to the Apostles successors, which *Bellarmino* sufficiently discovers, by deserting this place and fetching in another to his aid *Joh. 14* so his argument is cunningly patched up of two places. That God would lead them into all truth he proves from *Joh. 16.* That God will do this for ever, he would fain prove from *Joh. 14.* whereas this place doth not say, that *God would lead the Apostles into all truth for ever*, but only that *the Spirit should abide with them for ever*, and that as a Comforter, which is quite another thing: if not, let me see that Papist that will give it under his hand, that every one with whom the Spirit abides as a Comforter, is infallible. And yet if I should wink at this fraudulent dealing of *Bellarmino*, and admit the phrase *for ever* into the principal Text, this would not infer a necessity of stretching this promise beyond the Apostles, partly, because in Scripture-use that phrase doth frequently denote the term of life, as *Exod. 21. 6.* *The servant is to be with his master for ever*

ever, and 1 King. 12. 7.—*they will be thy servants for ever*, and principally because in strictest propriety of speech the spirit of God did and doth for ever abide in the persons of the Apostles. As God *betroteth* every one of his people to him *for ever*, Hof. 2. 19. and is their portion for ever, *Psal.* 73. 6. and the water that Christ gives to his people (which he himself expounds of the Spirit, *Joh.* 7. 28, 39.) is in them for ever. *John* 4. 14.

3. If this promise of *leading into the truth*, be understood of the Apostles and their Successors in the same manner, that is so as to make them both infallible, then as the Apostles severally considered were infallible, and not only when combined in Councils, so also are their Successors each of them infallible, (which all Papists deny.) It is a strange way of arguing which *Bellarmino* useth. The Apostles severally considered were infallible by virtue of this promise, and their Successors are comprehended in this promise; and their Successors are not infallible in their single capacities, (as the Apostles were:) *Ergo* they are infallible when they are gathered together. This is that I told you before, and here you see it exemplified, though Fallibility be in the premises, yet you shall be sure to meet with infallibility in the Conclusion.

4. If this promise of the Spirit did contain infallibility, and did extend beyond the Apostles, yet certainly it is a most unreasonable thing not only to communicate but appropriate this promise of the Spirit to such as have not the Spirit: such are all ungodly men, *Jude* verse 16, —*sensual, not having the Spirit*. Yea, in that very place which the Papists urge for a perpetual residence of Gods spirit in Popes and Bishops, *Joh.* 14. there is a positive exclusion of all ungodly men from any share therein, *vers.* 17. *The Spirit of Truth whom the World cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him*. A Character ascribed by God himself to all wicked men,

1 John 3.6. *Whosoever smeth* (be he Christian, Minister, or Pope) *hath not seen him, neither known him.* So in this Argument they run upon a double absurdity. 1. That they deny the promised guidance of the Spirit unto those Elect, Holy, and humble Christians, who are the only persons that in Scripture-account *have the Spirit, and are led by the Spirit, and walk after the Spirit.* 2. That they challenge the infallible guidance of the Spirit to those that have not so much as the general conduct of the Spirit which is common to all Christians.

5. That you may see the desperateness of the Popish cause, you may observe, that *Bellarmino* himself elsewhere denies the conclusion, which in this place he strives to obtrude upon us: For here he inferres the infallibility of Councils but elsewhere he laies down this position. *That a general Council may erre, and is not infallible, except the Pope confirms them*; that is to say, The Council in it self is Fallible, the Pope only is infallible, of which more by and by: And thus according to *Bellarmino's* opinion, the Bishops neither severally nor conjunctly are infallible, but in truth the Pope only is infallible. And so *Bellarmino* hath not only shuffled the Pope into the Text, but indeed justled out all others, and destroyed that infallibility of Councils which he pretended to assert; as became the Popes faithful servant to do. And so this is *Bellarmino's* Argument from these words, God hath promised infallibility to lead all the Apostles, and their Successors into all Truth, therefore none of the Apostles Successors are infallible save St. *Peters* only.

6. 17. A fourth place for the infallibility of Councils is *Acts* 15. 28. *For it seemed good unto the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burthen than these necessary things*: whence they thus argue; This Council had the infallible direction of the Holy Ghost, and conse-

consequently all other Councils have it.

*Ans.* 1. If the Conclusion be universally true ( which if it be not, it will do the Church of *Rome* no service) then the *Arrian* Councils were infallible: But if they say that only the orthodox Councils are infallible, that alters the question, and the Church of *Rome* must first prove her Orthodoxy, and then her infallibility, and to speak truth, she may prove the one as soon as the other.

2. The utmost importance of this phrase is, that they made this Decree by the direction of the Holy Ghost. *It seemed good to us by the direction of the Holy Ghost.* And for this there is no need to devise a new *Phenomenon* of infallible assistance to be afforded to all Councils ( of which there is not one syllable in the whole Chapter) seeing there are other wayes, mentioned in that place, in respect whereof they had the Holy Ghosts direction, and might say *it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us*, and by which the Holy Ghost did give its Testimony to their decree directed against those that urged the necessity of Circumcision upon the Gentiles. 1. It seemed good to the holy Ghost in as much as when the Gospel was preached to the Gentiles by *Peter-God bare them witness giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us*, v. 8. so making no difference between the Circumcision and Uncircumcision. 2. It seemed good to the holy Ghost, who in the Scripture had foretold the conversion of the Uncircumcised Gentiles to the Faith, and their reception into the Church. And for as much as it is exceeding plain that the controversie was debated in that Council principally if not solely by Scripture-Arguments, and the conclusion deduced from Scripture evidence, they might very well say it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, it was conformable to the Scripture, there being nothing more familiar than this, that what is said in Scripture is ascribed to the Holy Ghost; as *Act. 26. The holy Ghost sake by*  
the

the mouth of David Heb. 3. 7. *Wherefore as the holy Ghost saith, to day if you will hear his voice.*

3. If that phrase doth imply infallibility; yet the consequence doth not hold from Apostles to Bishops. I appeal to any Papist, ( whose Candour is not gone with his conscience ) whether this follow; A Council wherein were several persons, even in their single capacities infallible, had infallible direction, when they were met together; *Ergo*, Those Councils, wherein there is not one person but is confessed in his single capacity to be fallible, are infallible: If any or every Apostle had singly said, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to me*, would this have inferred the Infallibility of every single Bishop? They say no: Then let them shew a reason why the Argument proceeds not as well from single Apostles to single Bishops, as from Apostles conjoined in Council to Bishops conjoined.

4. There is also another inconsequence: The Apostles and Council had the Direction of the Holy Ghost in a conclusion regulated by Scripture, and collected from it: *Ergo*, All following Councils have the direction of the Holy Ghost, and cannot erre in all their conclusions whatsoever: Is not this a goodly Argument? This Council did not erre; *Ergo*, no other Council can erre. The words are only assertive of a present case, viz. of the direction of this Council in that point, not at all promissive of any thing for the future, and therefore can give us no security at all for the infallibility of Councils for the future. It would make fine work if every assertion were turned into promise: I might as well argue, *David* was guided by the Spirit of God in the ordering of Gods house (as you read 1 *Chron.* 28. 12. 19.) therefore all succeeding Kings of *Judah* were infallible. *Moses* was faithful in Gods house, Heb. 3. 5. *Ergo* none of *Moses's* Successors could be unfaithful.

Nothing

Nothing can be replied, but this; That *David* and *Moses* had a special assistance not communicated to all their Successors; And the same may as truly be said of this Council and the Apostles here assembled; but (saith *Bellarmino*) *Infallibility being granted to this Council as being necessary for the Conservation of the Church against Heresies, the same reason and necessity continuing, the same Infallibility must consequently be granted to following general Councils* (a). I answer.

1. If this Council, by reason of the Apostles, was infallible, yet this infallibility was purely accidental (because persons endued with Infallibility for other ends were there present) and not conferred upon them for the decision of the present controversie: and the reason why infallibility was bestowed upon the Apostles was not common to all but particular to that age and season, viz. because they were to lay a solid foundation for, and to give a sure rule to all the Churches in after ages, and therefore infallibility was their peculiar privilege. It is but a lame inference, Infallibility was necessary in the first Founders of Christianity, for the plantation and constitution of the Gospel Church; *Ergo*, it was necessary for the constant and perpetual government of the Church in all after ages. Upon the same warrant a man may argue thus: Miracles were necessary in the first erecting and laying the Foundation of the Church, *Ergo* they were necessary for the edification of the Church in all successive ages. In both cases the consequence is repugnant to common sense and reason, and confuted by Experience. For,

1. That such general Councils and their infallibility are not so necessary as the Papists would perswade us,

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(a) *De Conciliis lib. 2. cap. 2.*

plainly appears from hence, that God ( who is never defective in necessities ) left his Church for three hundred years together wholly without them, and yet the Church since the dayes of the Apostles, never had more stability in the Faith, and a greater plenitude of every grace and good works than in those times.

§. That you may see how litle reason there is, that Protestants should be convinced by this place, take notice that diverse of the Learned Papists are unsatisfied with this Argument, among which are *Ockam*<sup>a</sup>, *Cameracensis*<sup>b</sup>, *Ferus*<sup>c</sup>, and Mr. *White* in his Treatise *De fide & Theologia*, where he thus answers the Argument: Nor is it material that in that Apostolical Council they use these words, ( It seemed good to the holy Ghost and to us, ) for first, it was a Council of Prophets, in each of which Gods Spirit dwelt in a special manner, at least in the Apostles.— And he adds— If they acted with reason, doubtless they acted by the instinct of Gods Spirit, although not such as Divines feign to be assistant to Councils.<sup>d</sup>

A fifth place they urge is *Mut.* 28. verse the last, *I am with you alwaies to the end of the world.*

*Ans.* 1. Whatsoever this promise contains, the papists have no part in it, because it depends upon a condition which they have so grossly violated, *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and loe ( in so doing ) I am with you.* Christ commanded his Disciples to search the Scriptures; papists teach the

(a) *Par.* 3. *Dialog.* *trac.* 8. *cap.* 9. (b) *Quæst.* *de resumpta tit.* R.

(c) *In locum.* (d) *Neq; interest quod in Concilio Apostolico instituta sunt hæc voces, Visum est Spiritui sancto & nobis. Inprimis enim erat Concilium Prophetarum in quorum singulis habitabat Spiritus sanctus specialitè modo, saltem in Apostolis. Et paulo post, Si ex ratione agent, indubio ex instinctu spiritus sancti, etsi non tali qualem fingunt Theologi assistentem conciliis. Tract.* 2. *Parag.* 21.

contrary; Christ commanded all his Disciples that partook of the Bread to drink also of the Cup: Papists teach otherwise, and the like may be instanced in an hundred particulars.

2. Put this Argument into form, and it is this.

They whom Christ promiseth to be with, are infallible; But Christ promiseth to be with his Church: *Ergo* this Church is infallible. Here are three Propositions, and every one of them faulty in one kind or other. 1. For the *major*, it is most false: For Christ hath promised to be with every single sincere believer. *Joh. 14. 23. If a man love me — we will come to him, and make our abode with him.* So *John 17. 20, 21, 22, 23.* And the Holy Ghost (by which it is that Christ is present) is given to every such person: *Ergo* (it seems) they are infallible, 2. For the *Minor*, it is true, but impertinent. Christ hath promised to be with his Church and with his Ministers to the worlds end, but not in the same manner, and with the same degree of assistance as he was with the Apostles, to give them infallible direction. If otherwise, then as every single Apostle was, so every single Minister must be infallible, which they themselves deny. 3. The conclusion, if granted, reacheth not to *Rome*: For there being several Churches pretending to this promise, and the Text no more determining it self to one than to the other, it may as well be claimed by the Greek or English as by the Romish Church: Nay, which is more, *Rome* is excluded, or rather hath excluded her self from it, as we have seen, and by her disobedience to Christs commands hath cut off her Title to his promise.

§. 19. There is one place more they use to plead; it is *Mat. 18. 20. Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.* This I confess drives the Nail home: I see they are resolved to make sure work. For now it matters not what becomes of



of the Infallibility of the Pope or general Councils, of the Universal Church; For wherever there are but two or three Jesuites met together, pretending Christ's name, there is Infallibility. I think these Hereticks had better have held their Tongues, for then the Church of *Rome* would have been contented to assert the infallibility of Pope or Councils, but now they will not abate them an Ace, but will make it good in spite of Scripture, Fathers, and Councils, and all the World, that every Leash of popish Priests is infallible.

But I need say nothing more in answer to this ridiculous Argument, because the Answers to the last Argument will serve for this also: & their own great Doctors confess the impertinencie of this allegation, and amongst them two great names, *Stapleton* (a) and *Gregory de Valentia* (b): And these are the Scriptures upon which they ground their monstrous conceit of the infallibility of Councils. What a sandy foundation they have for it in Tradition we shewed before, and how little countenance they have from Scripture, and how absurdly they wrest that to their own destruction hath been now discovered, and therefore I may conclude, this Doctrine hath no Footing in Scripture nor Tradition, which was the first branch of the Proposition to be proved.

§. 20. And here I might set up my rest: For having pulled down the two pillars, upon which the Building of infallibility stands, I know no remedy but it must fall to the ground. But for the more abundant demonstration of the *αὐτοματὴν* of the Romish Doctors, and vanitie of their Religion, I shall add a second consideration, and shew, that however when they discourse with Protestants, they make a great noise about the Infallibi-

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(a) *Con. 6. q. 3. art. 4.* (b) *Tom. 3. Disp. 1. qu. 1. p. 117. 7.*

lity of Councils, yet when they debate the point among themselves, none deny it with greater seriousness, nor dispute against it with more earnestness than diverse of themselves. I speak not now of the private opinions of some obscure Doctors among them, but of the publick doctrines of the Church, the opinion of the Popes, Cardinals, and all the Jesuites, and stoutest Champions of the Romish Church, and the generality of Italian, Spanish, and German Papists, and almost all (some of the French faction excepted) do expressly deny the infallibility of Councils, and, which is more, they dispute against it; particularly *Cajetan*, and *Bellarmino*, and *Gregory de Valentia*, some of whose Arguments are these. *Infallibility is not in the headless body, therefore a Council in it self is not infallible. That from which there is appeal, is not infallible, but there lies an appeal from a Council to the Pope, Ergo the Church is committed to Peter, not to a Council, Ergo.* Thus *Cajetan* (a): *The Pope can either approve or reject the decrees of a Council, ergo the Council is not infallible. The Council hath its infallibility from its conjunction with her head the Pope, Ergo. Many Councils have erred in decrees of Faith, Ergo.* Thus *Bellarmino*. (b) By the way remember, this is the Gentleman that even now urged *Joh. 16.* to prove that Councils did not erre, and now he proves they have erred: it were well if the Romanists had either better consciences, or better memories. *God doth nothing in vain, but the gift of infallibility would be given to Councils in vain, seeing the Pope hath it, Ergo. That which is repugnant to our most assured Faith concerning the Popes primacy is not to be admitted; but the supreme and infallible authority of Councils is repugnant to the*

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(a) *De Autoritate Papæ & Concilii tract. 1. cap. 6. & 8. & 11. & 12.* (b) *De Autoritate Concilii cap. 11.*

*Popes primacy*, Ergo : thus *Gregory de Valentia* (a). So you see, by their own argument, either the Popes primacy or the Councils infallibility is lost: and as the Jesuites on the one side thus strenuously dispute down the infallibility and supremacy of councils, so their Adversaries on the other side do as stoutly overthrow the supremacy and infallibility of the Pope, wherein besides the positive testimonies of diverse of the most learned and antient papists, they have the suffrage of two late famous popish Councils, *Constance* and *Basil*, such a spirit of giddiness and division hath God put among these builders of *Babel*. And yet this is the *Jerusalem*, a city united in it self; these are the men that reproach the protestant churches with their divisions in some petit controversies, whilst they themselves are so irreconcilably divided in that, upon which the decision of all other controversies depends. viz. in the rule and judge of controversies. I think I need not say much more. For the more antient papists, he that shall look into that excellent discourse of *Robert Baronius* against *Turnbull*, called *Apologia pro disputatione de formali objecto fidei*, will find the infallibility of Councils expressly denied by *Ockam*, *Cameracensis*, *Waldensis*, *Panormitanus*, *Antonius*, *Cusanus*, ( all veneral le names in the Romish church ) whose words are there recited <sup>b</sup>. And for the modern Papists, it may suffice to name three authors of principal account, whom the rest of the herd do follow. *Melchior Canus* lays down their doctrine in two propositions. 1. *A general Council, which is not called and confirmed by the Pope, may erre in the Faith.* 2. *Provincial Councils, which are confirmed by the Pope, cannot erre, the rest may erre*<sup>c</sup>. And *Bellarmino* saith the same

(a) *Anal. fidei lib. 8. c. 7.*

(b) *Tract. 5. c. 19.* (c) *Concilium generale, quod non congregatum & confirmatum est auctoritate Pontificis, potest in fide errare.*

thing almost in the same words (a), and when he was gravel'd with the authority of that famous Council of Chalcedon, (a Council that Pope Gregory the great said he revered as one of the four Gospels) and a Decree of theirs against the primacie of the Bishop of Rome, he answers roundly, that that Decree is of no force, because it was made in the absence of the Popes Legates, who afterwards did protest against it (b). Where by the way we may take notice, what opinion that œcumenical Council had of the Popes supremacie and infallibility, who first passed and afterwards ratified that Decree, notwithstanding all the solicitations and protestations of the Romane Legate in the Popes name to the contrary. In like manner saith Andradius, That Council erred, in as much as it did rashly and without cause prefer the Church of Constantinople before that of Alexandria and Antioch. (c) And Gregory de Valentia being assaulted with a Canon of the Synodus Trullana, defends himself with this answer: That Synod is of no Authority, because its Canons were not confirmed by the Pope. d

§. 21. It is true, the Papists perceiving the danger of their cause from this difference between the Pope and Councils, have at last found out this *τοὐτὸν φάρμακον* (and

errare. 2. Concilia Provincialia, quæ à Papa confirmantur, errare non possunt, reliqua autem possunt. loc. cit. l. 5. c. 4.

(a) De Conciliis. lib. 2. c. 11.

(b) Decretum illud magni quidem est Concilii, sed non legitime factum, proinde nullius est roboris, vel authoritatis, quia factum est absentibus legatis Apostolica sedis & postea reclamantibus. De Pontif. lib. 2. c. 17. §. Quart.

(c) Erravit in eo, quod temerè & nulla ratione Constantinopolitanam Ecclesiam Alexandrinæ & Antiochenæ duxerint præferendam. in defens. fidei lib. 1.

(d) Trullana Synodus nullius est authoritatis, quia non erant ejus Canones approbati à Pontifice Romano. In libro de Cœlibatu. p. 861.

by that means they pretend they are all agreed ) the Pope and Council joining together are infallible. And in this sense their doctrine is true, that general councils are infallible, viz. if they are called and confirmed by the Pope. For answer whereunto I commend four things to the Readers observation.

1. Observe the nonsense of this Opinion. The question is, whether general councils lawfully called have an infallible assistance and guidance of the Spirit in the forming of their Decrees? The Papists affirm, we deny: now comes in a condition in their affirmation, which overthrows the affirmation it self. They are infallible ( say they ) if the Pope confirms them; well then the Council meets, considers, decrees, here is their work done, hitherto ( say our Masters ) they are fallible: they send them to the Pope for confirmation, for *ubi desinit Concilium, incipit Papa*: if the Pope confirms them they are infallible; if he disapproves them, they are fallible. And so it seems the Council receives infallible Direction from God for their work, after their work is done; and it ceaseth to be, before it be infallible, in spight of the old maxime of the Logicians, *Ab est tertii adjecti, ad est secundi adjecti valet consecutio*. Really the Councils have an hard bargain of it, that cannot get infallibility, till they have lost their Existency

2. Observe the hypocrisie and self-conviction of this opinion. The infallibility of Councils is the great γλαυκωμα cast before the eyes of those who cannot penetrate into the depth of things. Several Scriptures are pretended, which are said evidently to prove this infallibility; now we see they themselves deny the thing which they pretend to prove, & councils are infallible no farther than the Pope pleaseth: & with this key you must open all the alledged Scriptures; you must hear the Church, i.e. unless the Pope shut up your Ears. Christ is present where

two or three are met together in his name, viz. if they have all the Popes approbation. The Spirit will lead you into all truth, viz. if you follow the instructions of his holiness: and if a Council say, *It seems good to the Holy Ghost and us*, it signifies nothing, if it be not added, *and to our Lord the Pope*. Thus Councils are meer cyphers except the Pope adde his figure; and councils are joined with Popes, only as *Bibulus* was with *Cæsar*, to fill up a vacancy, and make a noise in vulgar ears. Nor is the wound of the popish cause healed by this device, but only skinned over: For as the assertors of the infallibility of councils denie infallibility to the Pope, further than he adheres to such councils; so the assertors of papal infallibility allow to Councils no infallibility, but what they have in dependance upon, and influence from the Pope. So *Bellarmino* in terms saith, *Infallibility doth not come partly from the Pope, and partly from the council, but wholly from the Pope* (a). And *Stapleton* is expresse: *The Pope receives no new power, nor authority, nor infallibility from the addition of a Council* (b). What need I say more, such contemptuous thoughts hath *Bellarmino* of the infallibility of Councils, that he spends one entire chapter upon the proof of this proposition, *That general Councils may erre, if they do not follow the Popes instructions, if they have not the Legates consent, nay more, if it be in a point where in the Legates have no certain instructions from the Pope*: and he gives us among many instances of erring Councils this remarkable one; *The Council of Basil by common consent, and with the Legates concurrence concluded, that a Council is above the Pope, which certainly is now judged er-*

(a) *Tota firmitas Conciliorum legitimorum est à Pontifice, non partim à Pontifice partim à Concilio. De Pontif. lib. 4. c. 3.*

(b) *Papa adjuncto Concilio nullam Potestatem, vel authoritatem, vel etiam certitudinem in judicando novam acquirit. in relect. con. 6. q. 3.*

venous (a). You see how hard it is for Councils to carry their disheven. By what hath been said, it appears what a sorry foundation the infallibility of Councils is, when from their principles it unavoidably follows, That a colledge of Jesuites is as infallible as a general Council: for they confess a provincial Council (which in it self hath no more Authority to oblige the whole church than such a Colledge) is infallible with the Popes concurrence, and without it general Councils are fallible.

3. Observe the insufficiency of this evasion: For if infallibility were granted to such a combination of Pope and Council, this gives them no relief, save only during the Session of the Council; for when the Council is dissolved, their Writings must endure the same Fate with the writings of the Apostles, of being unable to judge or decide controversies: For all the Papists most vehemently plead for the necessity of a living Judge, that can hear both parties; and determine all emergent controversies. Thus infallibilitie is not so much as *res unius ætatis*, nay oftentimes it is but *res unius anni*, like *Jonahs* gourd, it comes up in a night and withers in a night. And the Church for three hundred years after Christ had no infallibility, and since the Council of *Trent* the Papists have not had an infallible Judge, and at this day their Church hath no infallibility, and consequently no solid Foundation for their Faith.

4. Observe the preposterousness of this opinion. If Councils come to the Pope for confirmation, he may say to them as *John the Baptist* said to Christ, *Mat. 3. 14. I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?*

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(a) *Concilium Basiliense unà cum legato Pontificis communi consensu statuit Concilium esse supra Papam, quod rectè nunc judicatur erroneum. De Romano Pontifice l. 2. c. 11.*

So may the Pope say, I have need to be confirmed by your Authority, and without you am but *magni nominis umbra*, and do you come to me? But I confess *manus manum fricat*. If the Pope have any infallibility, he had it from Councils, for Scripture ownes it not (as we have seen) and the particular Fathers could not give what they never had, and now it is good manners to requite them, and so he communicates to them that infallibility he receives from them.

To conclude this consideration: It is sufficient for my purpose, which is acknowledged by the greatest and most considerable part of the Romish Church at this day, That general Councils in themselves are not infallible, and consequently are no solid Foundation for a Papists Faith, which is all this Proposition pretended to make good, though you see I have given them an *ὀρθομετεω*.

§. 22. A third consideration is this: If the infallibility of general Councils rightly called, constituted and ordered, were granted; yet this would give no advantage to the Romish cause, nor security to their Faith, & that for such reasons as diverse of the most Learned Papists themselves do stamp with their approbation. And here I might insist upon sundry particulars, but I shall confine my self to a Few, and for the rest refer you onely to one of their own Authors. *White* in the oft mentioned Treatise, who thus breaths out his doubts concerning this Doctrine of the Infallibility of Councils: — *If you assert an unknown and invisible influence of Gods Spirit, it is so uncertain and doubtful, that it is fruitless to contend about it. Seeing it is matter of strife rather than evidence to what Councils, and when, this assistance is given: whilst some quarrel with the calling, others the absence of Nations or Patriarchs, and others dispute about the presidency, and others about the method and circumstances in the handling of questions: others about the number, weight or de-*  
*gree*



gree of suffrages, others about confirmation, and others require the Churches Consent, ere it can be known whether this Assistance belong to the Council, or no (a). Where you may observe no less than ten several causes of doubting, and yet all these uncertainties they will rather run upon, than acknowledge the Authority and Sufficiency of the holy Scriptures, which are called a *more sure word* (2. Pet. 1. 19.) than that which had another kind and far higher degree of certainty than the decrees of Councils can ever arrive at: but I must not rest in generals. I shall particularly acquaint you with some of the Intrigues of the Romish Church, and their own requisites to the legitimations of Councils: I shall pick out three. 1. They confess the Council which is infallible must be œcumenical. 2. And its decrees must be ratified by the consent and approbation of the whole Church. 3. They must proceed sincerely, and faithfully, and piously in it. Now in all these things there are notorious defects in the Church and Councils of Rome.

§. 23<sup>rd</sup> 1. Most Papists grant that, that Council, to which infallibility is promised, must be general or œcumenical: and they that pretend to assert the infallibility of provincial Councils when confirmed by the Pope, do indeed utterly reject the infallibility of all Councils,

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(a) *Sed si ad ignotum & invisibilem assistentiam Spiritus Sancti relegitur, evadit adeo incerta & dubia, ut sine fructu aliquo de ea certetur. Cum quibus Conciliis & quando hæc assistentia debeat, altercationis, non evidentiæ plenum sit. His convocationem, illis Patriarcharum, aliis nationum absentiam calumniantibus: aliis de presidentia disputantibus, aliis de methodo & circumstantiis agendarum questionum; Aliis de suffragiorum numero, pondere, gradu; Aliis tandem de confirmatione decernantibus; Imo & consensum seu acceptationem Ecclesiæ per quietum usum & praxin efflagitantibus, ut sciri possit, utrum hæc assistentia Spiritus sancti sit Concilio debita necne. De Fide & Theologia, tract. 2. parag. 21.*

and ascribe it wholly to the Pope, and to Councils only by participation from him, and dependance upon him. If then any Councils be infallible, they must be general: to which purpose they alledge the saying of *S. Austin*, *That those only are Concilia plenaria, full and general Councils, which are collected out of all the Christian world.* (a) Hence the seventh Synod disowned the *Constantinopolitan* Council, and their decrees against Images, because they were not a general Council, and had not all the Patriarchs there (b.) And *S. Clara* calls it *The most received Doctrine of the Church*, and cites several Authors of great note to that purpose. (c) Now, to assume. The Councils pretended to the Romanists were no general Councils. To say nothing of former Councils (which in their greatest plenitude were only conventions of the Churches in the Roman Empire,) the latter Councils (on whom the weight of the Popish cause principally depends) were not œcumenical Councils. There is one acknowledged defect in them all, to wit, the absence of the Greek Church. Cardinal *Cusanus* complains, *At present (Alas!) the Catholick Church, and the Parochial Church of Rome have but one Council, seeing the whole Church is now reduced to one Patriarchate* (d.) And as the Objection is really unanswerable, so that which is offered instead of an Answer is very considerable, which *S. Clara* represents out of *Cusanus* and *Barlaam*: *That it matters*

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(a) *Ills sola sunt Concilia plenaria, que fiunt ex universo orbe Christiano. lib. 2. Bapt. cap. 3.* (b) *Quia sonus indictionis non existit in omnem terram, & etiam quia non habebat omnes Patriarchas, nec totum Delegatos.* (c) *In systemate fidei cap. 27. receptissimam hanc doctrinam num. 1.*

(d) *Hodie (proh dolor!) Catholicæ Ecclesiæ & Parochialis Romanæ sedis unum est Concilium, cum tota Ecclesia vadafacta sit ad illum tantum Patriarchatum. lib. de concordia 2. c. 15.*

not that only the Romane Patriarch and those united to him are there, and the Schismatical Patriarchs are absent, for general Councils are not to be collected out of Hereticks and Schismaticks, but out of the Orthodox, and such as are united to the Church (a). From whence I gather two things. 1. That if the Church of Rome cannot assoile her self from the imputation of Heresie (which by the leanness of their replies to the inditements of Protestant Authors sufficiently appears they are not able to do) their Couucils are constituted *ex indebita materia*, of undue materials, and therefore cannot pretend to infallibility, if there were any such thing *in rerum natura*. 2. That we are not to believe the Orthodoxy and much less the infallibility of Councils upon the credit of their naked assertion and absolute Authority, as the Papists affirm (seeing the most Heretical and Schismatical councils have ever asserted themselves to be Orthodox) but it is the right and priviledge of Subjects to examine and judge of the legitimateness of Councils, and consequently of the validity of their decrees.

§. 24. The second particular is this: That Councils are not infallible, nor their decrees unquestionable, unless they have the tacit consent and approbation of the whole Church. This position is laid down by S. Clara (in the forementioned Treatise,) there is required a tacit or interpretative ratification of the whole Church to compleat the definition of a Council b). Nor is this his private opinion, but he there confirms it from the words of *Panormitanus*, *Turnbul*, *Pope Leo*, *Petrus à Soto*, *Castillo*, *Mis-*

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(a) *Generalia enim Concilia non ex hæreticis & schismaticis, sed ex Orthodoxis & Ecclesia colligi debent. System. fidei cap. 27. p. 301.*

(a) *Ratificatio igitur nempe tacita vel interpretativa universalis Ecclesie requiritur ad complendam Concilii definitionem, in System. fidei cap. 22.*

*randula*, *Gersonius*, and others <sup>a</sup>. And afterwards he quotes these words out of *Petrus d' Aliaco*, That general Councils may err unless when they are accepted by the Universal Church, and then they are infallible <sup>b</sup>. And in another place himself expressly tels us, We are not presently to pronounce a thing *de fide*, by reason of some expressions of Councils or their Canons, but we must diligently enquire the constant judgment of the Church, else we shall find many Canons of Faith which do not agree with the Truth, according to the opinion of many (c). And *Celorius* hath these words: As we have seen before the common dissent of the Church hath rendered the Decrees of Popes and Councils invalid (d). I mention this the more fully, because it is a pretty device. It must be confessed the Religion of Rome cannot easily be mistaken for a piece of piety, but he that shall deny it to be an Art of policy will quickly be confuted, and here is an instance will put him to silence.

There is a double discovery of the Romish subtilty in this business.

1. You see how handsomly they make a virtue of necessity: now they mannage it as a principle taken up

(a) *Idem in cap. 23. per totum.* (b) *Probabiliter respondent aliqui, quod Concilium generale potest errare, & tamen quando & in quantum Concilia universalia acceptantur ab Ecclesia universali, infallibilitatem eis tribuunt.* Id. c. 26.

(c) *Non statim pronuntiandum quidvis esse de fide ex quibuslibet Canonum vel etiam Conciliorum loquendi formulis subinde apparentibus, sed constans Ecclesie iudicium tam ibi quam alibi diligenter expendendum est, alioquin multos fidei Canones numerabimus, qui veram doctrinam hand sapiunt, in multorum opinionibus.* Id. cap. 22.

(d) *Quemadmodum supra vidimus, publicam reclamantis Ecclesie vocem Pontificum & Conciliorum decretis robur detraxisti.* De Hierarchy. lib. 4. c. 12.

on choice, whereas *S. Clara* himself sufficiently insinuates that they were forced to it *se defendendo*, and took it up at a force put: for speaking of the former rules of discerning a general Council, he confesseth, *That their business is very intricate, and liable to many troublesome objections against the lawfulness of their Councils, but here is a short way to obviate those difficulties, by arguing from the reception of the Church, for if the Church receive it for a general Council, we need not trouble our selves about little matters, since this reception is sufficient evidence.* a

2. Here is an excellent Antidote against the saucy Decrees of several Councils, repugnant to the Popes supreme Authority. If the sixth Council of Carthage be pleaded, that there should be no appeal to Rome from beyond the Seas, if that of the Council of Chalcedon be urged, wherein they give *ισα τιτες βελα*, the same honours and privileges to the Bishop of Constantinople, as to the Bishop of Rome; If the latter Councils of Constance and Basil be alledged, wherein the Popes Subjection to Councils is positively determined: Now here is an Answer ready to this, and to all that former Councils said, and to all that any Council shall ever say to the Worlds end, viz. the canons of these Councils were not receiv'd by the whole Church, but opposed and rejected by the Church and Bishop of Rome, a great and eminent part of it. Thus I think, they have brought off their Master the Pope with honour, and as he was infallible, so now they have made

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(a) Cum negotium sit valde perplexum, multi etiam multa obiectari solent——quibus ea illegitima esse contendunt, in quibus non parum accessunt nobis molestie: In his vero omnibus, hoc saltem modo multum diminuetur difficultas, arguendo à posteriori scilicet ex ipsa receptione Ecclesie; utiq; si Ecclesia pro universalis receperit, non erit opus scrupulosius indagare minutiora, adeo ut hec receptio nobis manifestet, quodnam concilium estimari debeat tale. ubi supra c. 26.

him invulnerable. Scripture cannot hurt him, for he hath the Key of Interpretation. Fathers cannot reach him, for they are his Children (saith *Bellarmino*) as it is no news for the Pope to be well stored with Children. And now Councils cannot touch him, for he will hinder their universal reception. And, if the Romish Doctors be beaten out of this conceit, it is but studying some new Device, which is easily done by men that want no wit, and have no conscience: for it is resolved to hold the Conclusion, though the poor premises may be put to hard shifts. Well then, to allow them their supposition, and all the benefits of it, they must remember the rule of the Lawyers, *Qui sentit commodum, debet sentire & onus*: Benefit and inconvenience must go together. And this is the inconvenience and mischief which they are still forced into, notwithstanding all their tricks and stratagems, even to eat their own words, and to pull down with one hand that infallibility which they build up with another. For how can the Council or the Pope either be said to have that infallible guidance (which is pretended) in the making of their Decrees, if the Churches non-reception may prove their Fallibility? But Here is the wonder-working power of the Church of Rome: do not think it strange, when you read that passage in the Council of *Lateran*, delivered in an Oration before the Pope and Council, *That the Pope hath a power above all power in heaven or earth,* (a.) For he can do that which the Schoolmen unanimously put out of the reach of every power in heaven or earth, *viz. factum infectum reddere*, recal things that are past, and by this Argument prove, that the Council which was infalli-

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(a) In Papa omnem esse potestatem supra omnes potestates tam cæli quam terræ dixit Stephanus Archiepiscopus Patravensis, in oratione in Concilio Lateranensi coram Leone 10.

ble while it fate, after its dissolution is become fallible. But to return: This is to precipitate themselves into those absurdities which they Charge upon us. This is to make the Church judge of her Judges, this is to take away all the security of their Faith, if we may believe their own famous Council of *Basil*, whose words are these: *Nor let any man presume to say, that a general Council may erre, for if once this pernicious error were admitted, the whole Catholick Faith would stagger, and we should have nothing certain in the Church, for by the same reason that one may erre, the rest may erre also* (a). Besides hereby they run into a new Circle (as if all their former Circles were not sufficient.) If you ask what it is which makes the Faith of the Romish Church and people sure and infallible? it is the infallibility of the Pope and Council. If you ask again what is it which makes the decrees of Pope and Council infallible? It is the Churches reception of them: and yet all this, if granted, will not relieve them, for that the Decrees of their Popes and Councils have no such reception of the universal Church, appears sufficiently from the publick dissent of so many famous and flourishing Churches in the World, I mean the Greek and Protestant Churches, which do not therefore cease to be members of the Catholick Church because the Papists disown them, no more than the popish Churches become true members by their pretending to that Title.

§.25.3. There is another assertion of the Papists: that Councils are not infallible, unless they be rightly consti-

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(a) *Nec quisquam illud dicere præsumat, quod aliquod generale concilium legitime congregatum invalidum sit, aut errare posset, quia si hic perniciosus error admitteretur, tota catholica fides vacillaret, nec aliquid certi in Ecclesia haberemus, quia, qua ratione potest errare unum, possunt errare & reliqua. in respons. synodali.*

tuted and ordered. For this, I shall deal with them, as the Apostles did with their Kinsmen the *Cretians*, I shall implead them with an *ἐπετίς δὲ αὐτῶν ἰδοὺ αὐτῶν προφήτης*. Nay, not one but many *πολλοὶ καὶ ἀγαθοὶ* in their opinion. Councils (say they) may erre, if they do not proceed *Conciliariter*, i. e. in a regular manner, saith *S. Clara*, his words are these: *The most Learned Corduba* in *Questionario* lib. 4. qu. 1. (quoting *Roffensis* in his *Prologue* against *Euther* and *Horantius* in his places l. 2. c. 17.) saith, that God hath promised his assistance to a Council, when they do what in them lies — If they be Bishops, and Learned and prudent men selected out of the whole Church, if they proceed without carnal affections, and with a love to the Truth, then, and not otherwise it is gathered lawfully, and in Christs name (a). Thus *Bellarmino*, pressed with the Authority of the Council of *Chalcedon* against the Popes Supremacy, saith, *A lawful Council may err in those things wherein it acts not lawfully* (b). And *Petrus à Soto* (a man of a great account amongst them) tells us this is the fence of their assertion, [That Councils cannot err,] They understand it (saith he) of Councils lawfully congregated, and acting without fraud and deceit (c). And Pope *Leo* speaking of the causes of the errors of the Council of *Ephesus*, assigns this, because they did not proceed with a

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(a) *Dollissimus Corduba* in *Questionario* citans *Roffensem* in *Prologo* contra *Lutherum* veritate octava & *Horantium* in locis l. 2. c. 17. dicit Christum promississe assistentiam Spiritus sancti, quando Concilium facit quod in se est — si Episcopi & viri docti & prudentes ex tota Ecclesia, si sine affectione humana — sed affectu veritatis — tunc & non aliter est legitime & in nomine Christi congregatum. in *system.* cap. 20. (b) Concilium legitimum potest errare in iis quæ non legitime agit. de conciliis lib. 2. c. 7. (c) Cum dicunt concilia non posse errare, intelligunt legitime congregata, & absq; fraude & dolo agentia. in *defensione* c. 74.



pure conscience and right judgment<sup>a</sup>. So Maldonate in his Treatise against the Synod of Dort saith, *In vain do Synods assemble, and men go to them, when they do not remove all sinister affection, and only seek that which is Christs*; and he adds, *Then indeed they are gathered together in Christs name, then Christ is in the midst of them*<sup>b</sup>. The sum is this: Infallible assistance is not a gift dispensed promiscuously to Pope or Bishops, howsoever they demean themselves; but onely upon their good behavior, being the priviledge of those alone who act with diligence, fidelity, sincere love to the truth and good conscience; that is to say, to such persons as few Popes and popish Bishops have been. So that if any Popes or Bishops violate the conditions on their parts required, they may lose the priviledge on Gods part promised: if they be un sincere in their intentions, and biased with humane affection, if ambition or covetousness be in their hearts and sway their actions, *actum est de infallibilitate*, their infallibility is laid in the dust. It is true S. Clara saith, *We are to suppose that a Pope and Council do thus proceed, unless the contrary be evident*<sup>c</sup>. But I answer,

1. Thus the Doctrine of Infallibility, and the whole weight of the Romish Church and cause depends upon a meer supposition, and (which is far worse) upon such an one as can never be proved: for who can know the sincerity of another mans intentions but himself? *What man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of a man that is in him?* 1 Cor. 2.

(a) *Eo quod non pura conscientia & recto iudicio secundum consuetudinem, hi qui collecti sunt, de fide & erratibus protulerant. in Epist. 24.*

(b) *Frustra Synodi coeunt, frustra ad eas levr, quando non omni affectu sequiori remoto, solum id queritur quod Christi est—Tam demum in nomine Christi—congregantur, tum demum in medio eorum est Christus. In Antisynodico.* (c) *Supponendum quod semper sic procedat, nisi constet de opposito. System. c. 20.*

2. I note that these men craftily shift off the proof to us when it belongs to them, *asserenti incumbit probatio*. He that saith a Pope or Council proceeding sincerely and piously is infallible, is bound to prove two things. 1. That such an one is a lawful Pope or Council. 2. That such a lawful Pope or Council proceeds lawfully ( as *Bellarmino* himself requires ) and piously : And as it were an absurd conceit, if I require a proof that such a man is lawful Pope : to say *supponendum est*, &c, we must suppose him to be the Lawful Pope, unless the contrary be evident; so it is also when I expect a proof of the sincerity of his intentions, instead of a *probandum*, to tell me *supponendum est*, which is to tell me that I must venture my salvation upon a proofless assertion : And it is a new strain of popish Logick that Suppositions must pass for Arguments. 3. I observe the desperate issue of popish principles, the foundation of their Faith and Hope is the infallibility of Pope or Council : This infallibility they can have no assurance of ; which I thus prove. No man can have assurance of the performance of a Conditional promise, unless he have assurance of the performance of the condition ; but the promise of Infallibility is a conditional promise depending upon the honesty and sincerity of a mans intentions, which another man can never be assured of. Here we have a remarkable evidence of the perverse spirit of our Adversaries, and the indefensibleness of their cause. Those very men that are so curious and critical, that they will not allow a man to be sure of his own sincerity, now will needs have us to rest assured of the sincerity of another man. But how are we assured ? Why, with a *non constat de opposito* : an ingenious device, which will serve for many excellent purposes. Thus I may be assured that the present great *Mogul* is turned Christian, because the contrary is not evident. Thus I may be assured

red of the vertue; wisdom, and piety of every person that now lives at *Rome*, because the contrary is not evident to me. In a word, according to their Doctrines and Answers, a Papist hath no greater assurance of the Popes or Councils infallibility, than I have *That there is a World in the Moon, that the day of judgment shall be next year, or that I shall die to morrow, or that a thousand souls shall be converted by the next Sermon I preach*, because in all these I may say *non constat de opposito*, the contrary is not evident. Really the Protestants ought not to be envious at the assurance of the Papists, for they are contented with very moderate terms for it. If they would be satisfied with the same kind of assurance in conveyance of worldly estates as they are in the Salvation of their Souls, I believe they would get away all good bargains from their neighbours, but you will find them wiser there.

4. But alas for them, I fear I shall be cruel to them, for I cannot allow their *non constat de opposito*. They tell us we must suppose that Popes and Councils have alwaies acted sincerely and honestly, because we do not know the contrary: an assertion, which whosoever will undertake to make good, must combate the Faith of all History. I shall say nothing of the censures of protestants upon them (whose interest and opinion may render them suspected of partiality): But I hope they will not take it amiss if I represent some few of the innumerable Testimonies which their own most learned and approved Authors have given concerning the hypocrisie, impiety, fraud, ambition, avarice of their infallible Gentlemen, the Popes and popish Bishops. And were it not that the Pope hath a power of turning vice into virtue at his pleasure (according to that saying of *Bellarmino*, *In a good sence Christ hath given to Peter a power of making sin*

into be no sin, ( a ) it were impossible to mistake the Pope for a Saint. Let us hear some few of the expressions of such as lived and died in their communion. For the Popes, he that reads their own Historians, would think the name of *Holiness* were given to them by Antiphrasis, and that in meer pity they were allowed the name, who did not pretend to the thing. The Papal chair is called by themselves *Cathedra pestilentia*, a pestilential chair. Genebrard himself, though a sworn Vassal of the Popes, confesseth, as I observed before, that for 150 years together the Popes were *Apostatici*, Apostates, not Apostolicks, as if they succeeded *Peter* only in the denying of his Master; and yet these are our infallible masters. Who doubts but they can work Miracles at *Rome*, that can make *Apostacy* and infallibility dwell together in the same person? and however our Saviour said, *No man can serve two Masters*, and St. Paul, *What communion can there be between Christ and Belial*, yet the Papists are infallibly sure of the contrary, ( for if their most approved Authors may be credited ) diverse of the Popes have had infallible guidance of Gods Spirit, and undoubted communion with the Devil at the same time. For so saith *Platina* ( sometimes the Popes Library keeper, ) *All the Popes from Sylvester the second, even to Gregory the seventh inclusively* ( which were about 18 Popes ) *were Magicians.* ( b ) But I confess all the Popes were not Conjurers, for some of them were such silly wretches, that they did not understand Grammar, according to the report

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( a ) *In bono sensu dedit Christus Petro potestatem faciendi de peccato non peccatum. con. Barcla. c. 31. Vide quæ supra allegavimus.*

( b ) *Omnes Papæ à Sylvestro secundo ad Gregorium septimum inclusive fuerunt Magi. Platina.*

of their own Authors<sup>a</sup>; And yet these two were infallible Doctors. And *Ludovicus Vives* dealt too hardly with poor *Dullardus* for saying, *The better Grammarian, the worse Divine*; for here, it seems, the worst Grammarians were the best, nay the infallible Divines. All Histories are full of the ambition, frauds, forgeries, even of those who were accounted some of the best of their Popes, to say nothing of more abominable vices: nor did this corruption rest in the head, but from thence dispersd it self into all the members, the Cardinals, Bishops, Governours of the Romish Church. It was acknowledged by the Pope (and therefore infallibly true) *Adrianus* the sixth, by the name of the Popes and prelates, *We have all turned after our own ways, there is none that doth good no not one.*<sup>b</sup> The famous Chancellour of Paris, *Gerson*, complains that *Learned and godly Bishops were chosen no where, but carnal men, and ignorant of spiritual things* c. And so proud (saith he) that they do not know themselves to be men. *Duarenus* speaks home to this purpose: *Most of the Bishops of our time are greater strangers to Religion and holy things than any of the Secular Nobles, and they mind nothing but how to defend their possessions by right or wrong*<sup>d</sup>. *Ferus* cries out, who doth not see their insatiable

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a Cum constet plures Papas adeo illiteratos esse ut Grammaticam penitus ignorent, qui sit ut sacras literas interpretari possint. *Alphonius de Castro* con. Hereses c. 4 in editione An. 1543.

b Omnes nos declinavimus unusquisque in vias suas, nec fuit jamdiu qui faceret bonum, non fuit usque ad unum. In instructionibus ad legatos *Norinbergæ*, anno 1525. c Nullibi Episcopos bonos & opera ac Doctrina probatos eligi, sed homines carnales & spiritualium ignaros—Prelatos adeo superbos esse ut homines se nesciant. In declaratione defectuum Ecclesiæ. d Plerique Episcopi nostro tempore à religione & sacris, quam quovis satrapas & Principes profanos longè alieniores, nec aliud eis curæ esse, quàm ut ditiones & possessiones suas quo jure, quâve injuria teneantur. De sacro ministerio lib. 1. c. 4.

avarice and impostures of the Popes and religious men? with these all things are vendible <sup>a</sup>. And Stella informs us, there were few possessors of Benefices who had them otherwise than either by begging or paying for them. <sup>b</sup> And yet these were the good men of the Church of Rome, these are they who act in Councils sincerely from love to God and his truth, not seeking their own things but the things of Christ, and therefore without doubt infallible. And for the state of Councils, take one testimony for all, of one that was an eminent part and member of them, Cardinal Julian, who in his Epistle to *Eugenius* the fourth in the Council of *Basil* in plain terms tells him that all Councils, since that of *Chalcedon*, (which was above a thousand years ago) were instituted, not for the discovery of Truth, but for the defence and increase of the power of the Roman Church, and the liberty of Churchmen. <sup>c</sup>

Should I descend to particulars, and open the several impostures and palpable Frauds, which the Popes and their partisans have successively used in the packing of Councils, and making voices, and forging decrees, and engaging the Bishops by hopes, and fears, and interests, to give up their votes and consciences to the advancement of the Romish power and magnificence, I should engage my self to transcribe whole volumes, and cut out work for the whole term of my life. The Transactions of the Council of *Trent* are fresh in memory: And he that shall peruse the words of their own Historians, the Pro-

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(a) *Quis sacerdotum ac Religiosorum & Pontificum inexplebilem avaritiam & imposturas non videt? apud hos omnia venalia sunt. in Job. 2.*

(b) *Pauci sunt Beneficarii nisi aut prece aut pretio in Luc. 21.*

(c) *Omnia Concilia post Chalcedonense potissimum instituta fuerunt, non ut evinceretur veritas, sed ut reboraretur, defenderetur, atque augeretur semper Ecclesie Romane potestas, & Ecclesiasticorum libertas. Anas Sylvius lib. 2. de gestis concil. Basil.*

testations of Princes, the Censures of Universities relating to it &c. will easily be satisfied, whether *Clara's non constat de opposito* be true or no. And therefore notwithstanding this frivolous excuse it remains a truth, that according to the principles of Papists themselves, and because of those evident defects in them acknowledged by their own Authors, whatever Councils regularly called and ordered may pretend to, their Councils must lay down their claim to infallibility, and so their Faith hath no solid Foundation, as not in the Pope's authority, so not in Scripture, nor in the testimony of the Fathers, nor yet in the infallibility of general Councils. And therefore I may safely conclude, they have no solid Foundation for their Faith.

26. There is only one thing which may seem to retard the passing of the sentence: that is this. That although each of these taken asunder may not be sufficient, yet all put together make a Cord which is not easily broken, *Quæ non prosunt singula, juncta juvant*: and therefore forasmuch as the Church stands upon four pillars, Authority of Scriptures, Tradition of Fathers, infallibility of Councils, and the Pope, their Faith is like Mount Sion that cannot be removed. And if it be deemed an absurd and unreasonable thing (as we poor fallible creatures have thought) to prove the Scriptures from the Authority of the Church, Councils, or Pope, and circularly to prove the authority of the Church, Councils, or Pope from the Scripture; the Jesuites have found out the Quadrature of the Circle, and they tell you, that it is no more absurd that Scripture should lean upon the Churches authority, and the Church on the authority of Scripture, than that *S. John* the Baptist should give testimony to Christ, and Christ to him again; or that the Old Testament should be confirmed by the New, and the New Testament by the Old. This is one of their last pleas: We find them now retired

retired to their Fort-Royal, beat them out of this, and upon the matter all is lost: and truly that will be no hard matter to do, if the Reader please to consider. 1. The great disparity of the alledged instances. *John* and *Christ* might give testimony one to another, but neither of them did simply depend upon each others testimonies. Supposing that *Christ* had given no express testimony concerning *John*, yet I say the mission of *John* was not only true in it self, but sufficiently evident to the Jews, as plainly appears from hence: That the Pharisees, when asked by *Christ*, whether the Baptism of *John* was from Heaven or of men, were afraid to deny its Heavenly original, as being against the common sentiment of the Jewes: and *Christ* chargeth the Pharisees with rejecting the Counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of *John*, Luk. 7. 30. And much more true it is of *Christ*, that he did not depend upon the testimony of *John*, but had other and better testimony, *John* 5. 36. *But I have greater testimony than that of John.* And it is enough for my purpose, if either *Christ* or *John* had an authority independent upon the others evidence, though the other had not. And the like may be said of the Old and New Testament: well may they give testimony one to another, for neither of them doth totally depend upon the other. The old Testament did sufficiently evidence its authority, before ever the New Testament was written; and the New Testament too did carry other convincing evidences of its divine original and authority, besides the testimony of the Old Testament: such as the voice from Heaven? *This is my beloved Son*, 2. Pet. 1. 17. and the glorious miracles he did, *Joh. 5. 36. The works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me:* the holiness of his life, power of his doctrine, patience of his death. But now (to apply this to our present purpose) it is here far otherwise: for the Scripture (say they) doth not evidence it self



self any other way to us but by the Churches testimony, (as we have heard from their own words) and Councils, Fathers, and the Pope (we say, and have proved) cannot evidence their Authority and Infallibility any other way but by the Scriptures, (which according to their principles is impossible) or by their own testimony, which is ridiculous.

2. Let it be considered, that the Romanists do not make these four, Scripture, Fathers, Councils, and Popes coordinate and collateral foundations of their Faith, as if each of them did contribute a distinct and independent support unto the Romish Faith; but indeed they make one of them totally to depend upon another, and at last reduce them all to one, and (to speak properly) to none. For the Fathers, and Councils, and the splendid name of the Church, however they are pretended to put a fair gloss upon a foul cause, yet indeed the authority of them all is as vigorously disputed against by the most and learnedest Romanists, as by any Protestants in the world. You remember, what their great master *Bellarmino* told you, *That infallibility and supreme Authority is not partly in the Pope, partly in the Council, but wholly in the Pope:* what need we trouble our selves further? Those four are now reduc'd two, to Scripture and the Pope; and those two must mutually prove one another. There is no solid and sufficient ground for me to believe the Scriptures, but the testimony of the Pope, say the Papists; and there is no solid and sufficient ground for me to believe the Authority and infallibility of the Pope, but the testimony of the Scriptures. For the Fathers and Councils receiving all their Authority and infallibility from the Pope, cannot give him the infallibility and Authority they received from him. Now how senseless a resolution of Faith this is (though most of the Papists have no better and no other) you may perceive by some few instances. It is as if

if a Student should say thus: I should not believe such a book to be an excellent book, but for my Tutors testimony, who tells me so. And again: I should not believe my Tutors testimony to be of any validity, but for the testimony of that book concerning him. Who would not laugh at such an assertion? Or as if a man should say: I should not believe the honesty of *Richard*, were it not for the testimony of *Thomas*. And I should not believe the honesty of *Thomas*, were it not for the testimony of *Richard*. Where is there a man that will accept of such security in a trivial worldly bargain? and yet the Papiſts are content to venture their Souls upon it. From all that hath been ſaid, I conclude, that the pretended authorities we have diſcourſed of, do neither ſeverally nor yet jointly afford a ſolid Foundation for a Papiſts Faith, nor prove that infallibility which they pretend to; and conſequently, there is no ſolid Foundation for a Papiſts Faith. And here I might diſcharge my ſelf from further trouble, having diſcovered the Nullity of all the pretences which have been hitherto owned by the Church of *Rome*.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of Oral Tradition, and the teſtimony of the preſent Church.*

§. 1. **B**Ut becauſe I am reſolved to do their cauſe all the right that may be, and give them all the favourable allowance they can deſire, I ſhall conſider the ſingular conceits of their private Doctours, where the authors are any whit conſiderable, and their opinion hath any thing of plauſibility. There is then another ſhift, which ſome ſubtle Romaniſts have lately invented; who perceiving how their brethren have been beaten out of  
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the fieldby strength of Scripture and argument, in the conceit about the infallibility of the Pope or Council, come in for their succour with an Ununiversal Tradition, and the authority of the present Church. This is the way of *Rushworth* in his Dialogues, *Mr. White*, and *Holden*, and *Sir Kenelm Digby*, and *S. Clara*. Their defence and discourse is this, for I shall give you their opinion in their own words. *A man may prudently believe the present Church for her self, and ought so to do: a man needs not, nor is obliged to enquire further; - there he may safely fix:* (a) faith *S. Clara*. Thus the *L. Faulklands Adversary*: *That society of Christians, which alone pretend to teach nothing but what they have received from their Fathers, and they from theirs, and so from the Apostles, they must needs hold the truth which was first delivered: for if they could teach falsehoods, then some age must either have erred in understanding their Ancestors, or have joined to deceive their posterity, neither of which is credible. But the Church of Rome, and they only, pretend to teach nothing else, &c. Ergo they must needs hold the truth.* The acute *Mr. White* explains the opinion more exactly and fully, and the strength of his and their notion I shall give you in his words.

2. *The nations did understand the Doctrine taught by the Apostles, and practised it, and highly valued it, as most necessary for them and their posterity, and to be preferred before all other things.*

2. *Those first Christians even at their death, both could and would, and therefore doubtless did most vehemently commend this doctrine to their children: and the Fathers did alwaies deliver the same doctrine which they received from*

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(a) *Prudenter Ecclesie presentis propter seipsam credi potest & debet. — non est opus, nec obligatur homo ad inquirendum ulterius, ibi tuto sisti potest. System. fidei c. 10. ubi discrete asserit testimonium presentis Ecclesie esse infallibile.*

their Parents, and under that notion because they had received it.

3. If any delivered another Doctrine, he could be proved a lyar by the rest of the world; or if all should agree against their consciences to deliver a new doctrine, under that notion (scil. of a Doctrine delivered from their parents) that whole age would be guilty of treachery and parricide, and should agree to murder themselves, which is impossible.

4. There was a perpetual succession of Pastors, who took care of Faith and Manners; and it is evident, that the Pastors and people had the same Faith.

5. And their arose heresies, by which the truth might be more cleared, and they that maintained the antient doctrine might be distinguished from Innovators: which Innovators did not publicly reject the Apostles doctrine, but pleaded it was not rightly understood, and the other part kept the name of the Catholick Church.

6. It is necessary that that congregation, which alwaies kept the antient discipline, should alone profess that she received her opinions from Christ by perpetual succession, and that she neither did nor could receive any thing into the Canon of their Faith under another notion.

7. As certainly therefore, as one may know, that the congregation of believers, which at this day is called Catholick, is animated with a number of learned and wise men, so certainly will it be known, that she is not conscious of any newness of doctrine, and therefore there is no new doctrine.

8. Following ages cannot be ignorant, what former ages believed about those things which are explained in Sermons, Catechisms, Prayers, and Sacraments, and such are all things necessary to the Catholick Faith.

9. This doctrine delivered from hand to hand was confirmed by long custom, diverse lawes, rewards and punishments both of this and the following life, monuments of writers, by which all would be kept in it.

10 Following Rulers could not change the doctrine of their Predecessors without schism and notorious tumult in the Church, as daily Experience proveth. (a) To the same

(a) 1. Gentes intelligebant, quòd Apostoli docuerunt, & opere complebant, eamque doctrinam magni aestimabant, & summè necessariam sibi & posteris suis & cæteris omnibus negotiis præponendam. 2. Illi ergo primi Christiani doctrinam istam filiis & successoribus & potuerunt & voluerunt, etiam morientes, enixissimè commendare, ideòque indubiè hoc fecerunt. Et patres filijs eandem doctrinam semper tradiderunt, quam ipsimet acceperant à majoribus, & eo titulo credebantquia acceperant. 3. Si quisquam aliam (doctrinam) traderet, mendacii à reliquo orbe convinceretur, vel si omnes novam conarentur eo titulo tradere, conscientia teste, perfidii et parricidii tota illa ætas condemnaretur, & veluti ad se occidendos conspirarent, quod impossibile est. 4. Pastores perpetuò successerunt, qui curam fidei & morum gererent: (constat autem quòd populi & pastorum una fuit fides, una doctrina. *Idem trac. 2. §. 3. pag. 114.*) 5. Et hæreses ortæ sunt, quibus veritas magis elucesceret & distinguerentur retentores doctrinæ antiquæ contra novatores. Quiquidem novatores non palam averfabantur doctrinam Apostolorum, sed esse malè intellectam contendebant: reliquæ autem parti mansit nomen Catholicæ Ecclesiæ. 6. Necesse est autem eam fidelium congregationem, quæ semper antiquæ disciplinæ tenax erat, solam profiteri se à Christo per successionem perpetuam dogmata sua accepisse, nec quicquam alio titulo recepisse in fidei Canonem; neque unquam recipere posse. 7. Quanta itaque certitudine quisquam agnoscere potest congregationem illam fidelium, quæ hodie Catholica dicitur, esse virorum prudentium et doctorum multitudine animatam, tanta certitudine ipsi constabit eam non esse consciam sibi de aliqua doctrinæ novitate, ideòque nullam esse novitatem. 8. Nullo modo potest latere succedanea sæcula, quid præeuntia crediderint circa ea quæ concionibus, catechesibus, orationibus, & sacramentis exponuntur: talia autem sunt universa ad fidem Catholicam necessaria. 9. Confirmata erat hæc doctrina per manus tradita longa consuetudine, variis legibus, præmiis et poenis tum hujus tum sequentis vitæ, scriptorum monumentis, quibus omnes in ea retinebantur. *Thomas Angelus in sono buccinæ, de fide & Theol. tract. 1. parag. 4. & 5.* 10 Rectores succedanei non poterant decessoris doctrinam immutare absque schismate, et notorio Ecclesiæ tumultu, ut quotidiana experientia comprobatur. *De fide & Theol. tract. 2. parag. 3.*

purpose

purpose also *Holden* discourseth in his Treatise of the resolution of Faith. This is a new Plea, and deserves special consideration.

§. 2. For Answer, 1. I give Mr. *White* and his worthy Partners humble thanks for the great favour or rather justice done by them to the Protestant cause. For, whereas this is the perplexing question, wherewith they think to puzzle us, How we can know the Scriptures to be the word of God without the Churches infallible authority? and from the supposed infallibility thereof, they infer the necessity of the Churches authority: these kind-hearted Gentlemen have helped us out of the bryars: for now it seems, and it is a truth, and so far the argument from Tradition is really conclusive, that we may know the Scripture to be the word of God without the Churches infallible authority, viz. by tradition. And the argument of Tradition would not at all lose its strength if the Church were wholly stript of the capacity of a judge, and retained only the qualification of a witness, and consequently the Churches authority is not at all necessary. And if the Church should boast of her authority against or above Tradition, it may be said to her according to these mens principles, as the Apostle said to the Gentiles, *Rom. 11. If thou boast, thou hearest not Tradition, but Tradition thee*, for so say these Doctors. Mr. *White* spends one entire Chapter upon the proof of this Proposition, that the succession of doctrine is the only rule of Faith (a), and saith, that whether we place this infallibility in the whole body of the Church, or in Councils, or in Scriptures, in each of these their authority is resolved into and all depends upon Tradition (b). And he spends several Chapters to shew,

(a) De fide & Theol. tract. 2. Parag. 18.

(b) Sive infallibilitatem in corpore Ecclesie — statueris, firmitas & possessio doctrine, quam habet est traditio; sive in Conciliis, — sive in Scripturis, earum autoritas in traditionem resolvitur. De fide & Theol. tract. 2. parag. 18.

that neither the Pope, nor Councils can give any solidity, or certainty to our Faith, but what they have from Tradition. If it be said, Tradition is conveyed to us by the Church, and so there is still a necessity of her Authority, I answer plainly, no. It follows only, that there is necessity of her Ministry, but not of her Authority. A Proclamation of the King and Council could not come to my hands, (if I live at York,) but by a Messenger, and by the Scribe or Printer: But if any from this necessity of his Ministry infer his Authority, I may well deny the consequence. But because it is unhandsome to extenuate a courtesie, I hold my self obliged further to acknowledge the great kindness of our Adversaries, who not contented to assert the validity of the Protestants Foundation of Faith, have also overturned their own, which that you may the better understand, I shall briefly represent to you the sweet Harmony of these *Cadmean* Brethren, and how God hath confounded the language of *Babels* Builders: so that they have little to do, but to stand still, and see the salvation of God, while these *Midianites* and *Amalekites* thrust their swords in one anothers sides.

The opinion and language of most papists in the world is this, That Tradition is therefore only infallible, because it is delivered to us by the Church which is infallible. (a) If you ask Bellarmine what it is, by which I am assured that a Tradition is right, he answers because the whole Church which receives it cannot erre. (b) So the late

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(a) *Labyrinthus Cantuariensis*. p. 68.

(b) Quando universa Ecclesia aliquid servat, vel aliquid tanquam fidei dogma amplectitur quod non est scriptum, necesse est dicere ab Apostolis traditum. Ratio est quia cum Ecclesia universa errare non possit, 1 Tim. 3. &c. Certè quod Ecclesia de fide esse credit, sine dubio est de fide. de verbo Dei lib. 4. c. 9.

Answer of Bishop Laud. There is no means left to believe any thing with a divine infallible Faith, if the Authority of the Catholick Church be rejected as erroneous, and fallible, for who can believe either Creed, or Scripture, or unwritten Tradition, but upon her Authority. (a) Nay, S. Clara himself, notwithstanding his Romantick strain, That Tradition, and the naked Testimony of the present Church is sufficient, yet elsewhere confesseth the Churches infallibility must necessarily be supposed to make my Faith certain. His words are these: *The Testimony of the Church, by which Traditions come to us, is infallible, from a Divine Revelation, because it is evident from the Scripture, that the Church is infallible: and presently after, If the Church were not infallible, it could not produce in me an infallible Faith* (b). And this was the constant Doctrine of the Romish Masters in all former Ages. Now come a new Generation, who finding the Notion of Infallibility hard beset, and the pillar shaken, they support their cause with a quite contrary position, that it is not the Churches infallibility that renders Tradition infallible (as their former masters held) but the infallibility of Tradition that makes the Church infallible, and therefore they say, the Church her self is no further infallible than she follows Tradition. Thus Mr. White plainly tells us, that *Councils are not infallible, because the special assistance of Gods spirit makes them infallible, but because by irrefragable testimony*

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(a) In Lauds labyrinth. ch. pag. 17. (b) Dico secundo quod testimonium Ecclesie per quod nobiles illæ veritates (traditæ) innotescunt infallibile est, nempe ob revelationem divinam: quia manifestè habemus in Scripturis, Ecclesiam esse infallibilem—si igitur illa [Autoritas Ecclesie] non esset infallibilis, non produceretur in nobis fides infallibilis. *system. fidei* c. 10. num. 3. (c) Non quia speciali spiritus sancti instinctu infallibilitas iis affletur, sed quia irrefragabili testimonio successionem Doctrinæ roborant—& sunt irrefragabiles testes traditionis, pro iis decertandum est. *De fide & Theol. tract. 2. Parag. 21.*



they confirm the succession of their Doctrines, and are such witnesses of Tradition as cannot be refused.

Thus Holden having told us; that the Popes infallibility is controverted on both sides by just, godly, and most learned Catholicks, as well antient as modern; and neither side condemned by Authentick censure, (\*) (which, by the way, discovers the desperateness of the greatest part of the Romish Church at this day, which venture their Souls, and rest their Faith upon what themselves confess to be a doubtful Foundation, viz. the Popes infallibility:)

All Divines (saith he) confess it is not certain with a Divine and a Catholick Faith, (he comes to lay down this Conclusion,) that the infallibility of the Church is not from any priviledg granted to the Roman See, or S. Peters Successor, but from the Universal and Catholick Tradition of the Church<sup>c</sup>, and Councils fare no better than Popes. They are (saith he) not Founders, but only Guardians and Witnesses of revealed Truth<sup>d</sup>. So Mr. White allows neither Pope nor Councils any infallibility, but what they have from Tradition, as we have seen; and tells us in express terms, that Tradition is overthrown, if any other principle

(a) An summorum Pontificum decreta sint ex institutione Christi ab omni errore libera—hæc, inquam, in utramq; partem ventilata videmus à piissimis quamplurimis & doctissimis Catholicis Authoribus tam antiquioribus quam recentioribus, quorum neutram partem audivimus unquam fuisse censuris aliquibus authenticks prohibitam aut improbatam: Quapropter evidentissimè constat Catholicum neminem astringi aut huic aut alteri parti adherere tanquam fidei Catholice & Divine articulo: —De resolat. fidei lib. 2. c. 1. pag. 174. (b) Nec opus est, meo iudicio, divinam infallibilitatem Romane sedi annectere (quod omnes Theologi agnoscunt non esse divinam & Catholicam fidem certum. Id. ib. p. 178.) (c) Ecclesie infallibilitas non privilegio aliquo aut sedi Romane, aut sancti Petri successoris divinitus impartito—sed universe & Catholice traditioni Ecclesie—præcipuè tribuenda est. idem ib. p. 174. (d) Episcopi in Conciliis sunt tantummodo Custodes, ac Testes veritatum revocatarum, non autem conditores. Holden lib. 1. c. 98 p. 153.

be added to it : For here lies the solidity of Tradition, that nothing is accepted by the Church but from Tradition.

§. 3. Well, what shall the poor unlearned Romanist do, that finds his great Masters at variance in the very Foundation of his Faith: Here are two contradictory assertions; one of them must be unavoidably false. A man may with probability at least assert the Falshood of either of them, having the suffrage of diverse of their own most learned Catholick Authors for him in either opinion; but whether they be true or false, their cause is lost.

1. If they be true. And 1. if that be true, that Tradition be the Foundation of the Churches infallibility, then 1. Whence hath Tradition this infallibility? From Scripture? That they utterly disclaim. From Tradition? Then why may not Scripture give Testimony to it self as well as Tradition? And whence hath that Tradition its infallibility? and so *in infinitum*? Is it from the reason of the thing? So Mr. *White* implies, who attempts to prove it by rational and Logical Discourse, but himself hath prevented that, while he saith, *To lean upon Logical inferences is to place the Foundation of our Faith and the Church in the Sand*<sup>b</sup>. And S. *Clara* gives a check to this: *It is more reasonable and wise, even for the most Learned and acute persons to rely upon the Authority of the Church, than to adhere to our own reasonings how plausible soever*<sup>c</sup>. And that is largely disproved in

(a) *Evertitur Traditio, si aliud fidei principium ei addatur. Iude enim est Traditionis firmitas, quod nihil nisi ex ea ab Ecclesia acceptetur. De fide & Theol. l. 2. parag. 18.*

(b) *Logicis niti ratiunculis est fidei & Ecclesie fundamenta in sabulo collocare. ubi supra tract. 2. parag. 18.* (c) *Dico igitur quod rationabilius & sapientius est, etiam respectu Doctissimorum & acutissimorum hominum, Autoritati Ecclesie, quam ratiunculis nostris licet apparentissimis adhaerere, System. fidei cap. 12. n. 9.*

the following Discourse. Is it then from the Churches infallibility? This they deny, and allow the Church no infallibility independent upon Tradition.

2. Seeing they grant the Church may erre, if she recede from Tradition, I can never be sure she doth not erre, unless I be sure she keep to Tradition: And therefore I must examine that, and judge of it, and so private men are made judges of Controversies, which they so much dread.

3. Hereby the Authority of the Pope and general Councils of Bishops is rendred unnecessary. I prove it thus: If these be necessary only as witnesses to Tradition, then their Authority is not necessary; for it is not Authority, but knowledge and fidelity which renders a witness competent. A Lay-hearer of *St. Paul* may be as competent a witness of the Doctrine he heard *S. Paul* preach, as a Bishop, supposing a parity in their knowledg, fidelity, and converse with the Apostle; and another Bishop may be as competent a witness as the Bishop of *Rome*, and consequently as infallible; and any congregation of discreet and pious Christians, who heard *S. Peter* preach, are as infallible witnesses as the Church of *Rome*; and if there were a general assembly of Lay-men of equal knowledge and Experience, they are as infallible witnesses what the Faith of the next precedent age was, and what the Faith of the present Church is, as a Council of Bishops: nay (to speak truth) they are more credible witnesses, because less biassed by interest, affection, or prejudice. These rocks the first branch throws them upon.

2. If they fly from this, and make the Churches infallibility the foundation of Traditions (as the most papists do) then they must demonstrate that infallibility from Scripture, Fathers, or Councils, which we have seen they cannot do. So that if either of their positions be true, their cause is lost.

But 2. If either of them be false, they are gone too. For if Tradition be not infallible in it self without the Churches Authority (as the one side saith,) then the Papists have no certain rule for the Church to steer its course by, (for the Scriptures they do not own as such) and if the Church be not infallible but by vertue of this Tradition (as the other side saith,) then they confess the insufficiency of all their proofs from Scripture and from the Authority of Fathers and Councils, and their Authority is no more than that of any Faithful or credible Historian, and instead of a Divine the Papists have nothing but an Historical Faith. I shall conclude this first Answer with one Syllogism from the words and assertions of Mr. White, *Tradition is overthrown if another principle of Faith be added to it.* But the most and learnedest Doctors of the Romish Church do add another principle to it, viz. the Churches authority and infallibility, as I shewed from their own words; *Ergo*, either tradition, and all this new device, or the Authority of the Romish Church is overthrown.

§ 4. *Ans. 2.* This new Conceit directly thwarts the design of God in the writing of the Scripture, and indeed the common sence and experience of all mankind. For hereby a verbal Tradition is made a more sure way of conveyance to posterity than a writing. It hath been the wisdom of God in former ages to take care that those things might be written, which he would have kept in remembrance. *Exod. 17. 14. Write this for a memorial in a Book.* So little did God trust this (now supposed infallible) way of oral Tradition, that he would not venture the Decalogue upon it (though the words were but few, and the importance of them so considerable, both in truth, and in the apprehensions of the Jews, that if M. Whites argument have any strength in it, it was impossible posterity should ever mistake it) but  
write

write it with his own finger once and again after the breaking of the first Tables. And although, whilst the Church was confined to a Few Families, & divine revelations were frequently renewed, verbal Tradition was sufficient, yet when the Church came to be multiplied, and especially when it comes to be dispersed in all Nations, and Revelations cease, then Writing proves of absolute necessity. How far the first and wisest Christians were from Mr. *Whites* opinion appears from hence, that not daring to lean upon the broken Reed of Oral Tradition, they did earnestly desire the Apostles to commit their Doctrines to writing. *Eusebius* reports that S. *Peters* hearers were not content with this way of Tradition from *Peters* mouth, but (for want of Mr. *Whites* presence there to convince them of their Folly) they earnestly begged it of Mark, that he would leave them that Doctrine in Writing which they had received by word of mouth<sup>a</sup>. And *Hierome* tells us, that St. *John* the Evangelist was almost forced to write by all the Bishops of Asia, who (it seems) were raw Novices, who did not understand their Catachism, nor the first principle in it, viz. the sufficiency and infallibility of Oral Tradition. And St. *Luke* gives it us under his hand (not fearing either Mr. *Whites* Anger or his Argument) that he wrote his Gospel *ad maiorem ἀσφάλειαν*, that Christians might have the greater certainty, *Luk.* 1. 3, 4. When *Job* desires the perpetual continuance of his words, he wisheth, *O that my words were now written ! Oh that they were Printed in a Book !* *Job.* 19. 23. And *David* in the same case

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(a) *A Marco multis & variis precibus contendeant, ut monumentum illud doctrine, quod sermone & verbo illis tradidisset, etiam Scriptis mandatum apud eos relinqueret. Histor. lib. 2. cap. 14.* (b) *Johannes ab Asia Episcopis pene omnibus coactus est ad scribendum. Prasat. in Evan. Mat.*

would not rely upon Tradition, but takes this course for assurance: *This shall be written for the generation to come, Psalm. 102. 18.* But because Mr. White undoubtedly is a better Philosopher and Divine than either *Luke*, or *Job*, or *David* were, (and therefore good reason they should all yield to his more penetrating wit and deeper judgment) he shall do well to remember, that God himself was of the same judgment, — *Go, write it before them in a Table, and note it in a Book, that it may be for the time to come for ever. Isa 30. 8.* And to this agrees the common experience of mankind. *Vox audita perit, littera scripta manet*: verbal Traditions quickly vanish, only writings are durable. Hence those famous Laws of *Lycurgus*, Institutes of the *Druides*, Philosophy of *Pythagoras* are upon the matter wholly lost, and only some few fragments reserved, because not committed to writing. But this will be put out of doubt by reflecting upon the History of Mankind, whereby the aeriness of this phantasm will be discovered, and the great difference between Tradition and Writing in point of certainty demonstrated. *Adam* and *Noah*, the two successive heads of mankind, did doubtless deliver the true Doctrine to their posterity, with the same important circumstances, (which Mr. White supposeth in the Doctrine of the Gospel) as a Doctrine of everlasting consequence, and they so received it, and for a season transmitted it to their Children. But alas! how soon was all obliterated, and in this sense all mankind (some very few excepted) did agree to murder themselves, and they actually did that which Mr. White saith was impossible. And so from hence forward let all Logicians take notice of it, that *Ab esse ad posse non valet consequentia*. Well, some Centuries after comes *Moses*, and by Gods command delivers a Law in Writing, and this Law abides, and the Jews to this day retain it in remembrance and veneration

ration, and for above 3000 years together have been thereby kept from those Pagan opinions and Idolatries, which all the Scholars of Tradition almost in the whole World have fallen into : and consequently Writing is a sure, and Oral Tradition an unsafe and uncertain way of conveyance : and this principle hath had universal influence upon the actions of wise men, in all ages, and in all things. Hence care hath alwaies been taken for the writing of Canons of Councils, Decrees of Courts, Acts of Parliament (though the importance of them were many times so great and evident, that according to this new notion, Writing was superfluous, and verbal Tradition infallible.) And if those wise men durst never trust unwritten Tradition with their Estates and worldly concerns, shall we be so mad as to venture our Souls upon it ? Let Papists do so, who having given up their consciences to the Pope, cannot say their Souls are their own, but let them not be displeased, if we desire to make a wiser bargain. But our English Apostate hath a distinction to save this gross absurdity. *It is true* (saith he) *of Doctrines meerly speculative, that the memory is not so safe a depositary as Written records, but not of such as may be made as it were visible by practice.* And he is pleased to give an instance in the *Doctrine of the Sacrament and Christs real unfigurative presence in it, which* (saith he) *was more securely and clearly delivered by the Churches practice, than could be by books Written ; their Prostrations and Adorations demonstrated their assurance of his real presence, where every mans saying Amen at the Priests pronouncing corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi. expressed their confession of that Presence, with exclusion of all tropes and figures in the business.* Exomol. §. 1. c. 8. And are these the great and visible assurances of Doctrines, to which all the security of Writings must strike sail ? are these grounds so evident, that the Doctrines could not possibly have been

been more securely propagated and more clearly and intelligibly delivered to posterity in Writing, as *Cressy* daringly asserts? See *Exomolog. Sect. 1. chap. 8*, O the besotting nature of Popery! O the tremendous judgment of God punishing Apostacy with an ἀδίκημα & ὄσος, a reprobate sence! Dare this miserable man say these are clearer evidences of the real presence, than if it had been said *in terminis*, *This is my Body* in a proper and corporeal sence, or this Bread is converted into the very substance of this Body which you now see? These men may well say what they please, for it appears they can believe what they list.

May I with the Readers leave in few words, discover the shameful weakness and horrid impudence of this assertion. Is it true indeed, that the prostrations and adorations of Christians, discover'd their assurance of the real corporeal presence? and of all men living could Mr. *Cressy* say this, who had so oft seen others receive, and himself received the Sacrament in *England* and *Ireland* in a posture of Adoration, viz. kneeling, with an assurance of the falshood of that opinion of the real corporal presence? Why might not the Special yet Spiritual presence of Christ in the Sacrament occasion this prostration, as well as the special and spiritual presence of God in the Ark occasioned the Jewes to fall down and worship at his Footstool? And must the poor Clark come in with his *Amen* to help the lame Priest over the Stile? Why, there is not a Protestant, but when he hears these words pronounced, *this is my Body*, will say this Amen to it, and acknowledg it so to be, but still Christs words must be taken in Christs sence, and that is, though figurative, yet very frequent in such cases. In short, since these are the practical visible Arguments alledged as instances of the infallible certainty of Oral Tradition, above all that can be said in writing, I hope the Reader (who concerns



cerns himself either in matters of credit or conscience) will easily discern and ingenuously confess both the absurdity of their Arguments and assertion, & the solidity of this second Answer, and the advantage of Writing above unwritten Tradition.

§ 5. *Ans. 2.* If this assertion be true and solid, and Tradition be an infallible Foundation of Faith; as these men pretend, then no error could come into the Church under pretence of Tradition from the Apostles. That is evident in it self (else an infallible Authority is liable to error, which is a contradiction) and it is granted by our Adversaries, who therefore tell us, that all Hereticks recede from the Tradition of their Fathers, and broach new and unheard of Doctrines, as we have seen.

But errors may come into the Church under pretence of Tradition. Here all the doubt lies, and therefore I shall endeavour to make it good; a task which would be wholly superfluous, if the impudence of our Adversaries, and the desperateness of their cause did not oblige them to require, and us to give the proof of the most evident Verities. I might insist upon the doctrine of the *Chiliasm* (which the Papists confess to be false) which was commended to the Church by *Papias* and *Irenaeus* too as an Apostolical Tradition, and so received by the generality of Orthodox Christians saith *Justin Martyr*. This argument is rendred more considerable, by the pitiful evasion wherewith Mr. *White* shuffles it off, saying, *That the Chiliasm were deceived by Cerinthus, who feigned he had this from the Apostles in private discourses, not in publick preaching.* (a) For (to say nothing of this that the Fathers derive its pedigree from another root) whatever was the occasion and ground of this mi-

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(a) *De fide & Theolog. tract. 1. § 7. p. 20.*

stake in that Tradition, it sufficiently proves what I intend *viz.* that many or most of the Guides of the Church may receive false Doctrines as coming from the Apostles, and so transmit them to their Posterity, which is the thing now denied. It was an old Observation of *Irenæus* concerning the Hereticks of his time (one would think the words were not only Historical of them, but also Prophetical of the Papists,) *When Hereticks are reproved out of the Scripture, they begin to accuse the Scripture, as if Truth could not be discovered by those that know not Tradition* (a). The *Arrians* pretended they had their Doctrine by Tradition from their Ancestors: particularly they named *Origen*, *Dionysius*, *Alexandrinus*, and *Lucian*, the Martyr, by whose hands the Doctrine had been conveyed to them, as *Baronius* acknowledgeth. *Epiphanius* tells us, the *Cajani* pretended *S. Paul* as the Author and Founder of their Heretical Doctrines. The *Pelagians* boasted of their Doctrine, *That it had been alwaies celebrated by the Learning of Holy men* (b). The Doctrine of rebaptization (which the Papists acknowledg to be erroneous) was brought in by *Cyprian* and the *African* Bishops, under a pretence of Tradition: The words of *Cyprian* are these: *We do not now broach a new Doctrine, but one long since decreed by our Predecessors* (c). It is true *Pamelius* saith he means this of his immediate Predecessors, *Agrippinus*, and the rest; and that will serve my turn, if *Mr. Whites* Argument will hold: for then no

(a) *Cum ex Scripturâ arguuntur heretici, in accusationem convertuntur Scripturarum, quia non possit ex his inveniri veritas ab his qui nesciunt Traditionem: lib. 3. c. 2. pag. 169.*

(b) *Eam sanctorum virorum semper celebravit eruditio. Aug. lib. 1. contra Julianum. & lib. 2. de Bapt. c. 3.*

(c) *Sententiam nostram non novam promimus, sed jampridem ab antecessoribus nostris statutam, Epist. 73.*

Age (and consequently not this) could either be ignorant of, or knowingly recede from the Doctrine of their Fathers, nor they from their Fathers, and so upward to the Apostles. And indeed *Cyprian* carries it higher, even to the Apostles, whilst he calls it *The Faith of the Catholick Church*, and reckons it amongst the *Apostolical and Evangelical precepts* <sup>a</sup>. And *Firmilian* expressly affirms it was delivered by Christ and his Apostles <sup>b</sup>. And will these mens confidence yet serve them to assert, that no error could come into the Church by Tradition.

If all those eminent *African* Bishops and Churches might either mis-understand their Ancestors or deceive their Posterity, (as Mr. *White* cannot deny they did either the one or the other) why might not the *Spanish* or *French* or *Romish* do it. If it be said, there was a promise to the contrary at least for the Church of *Rome*. To say nothing of the manifest weakness of that pretence, I answer two things: 1. That Mr. *White* expressly rejects this Infallibility by promise. 2. However this Argument being of another nature, and depending not upon the promise of God, but the nature and evidence of the thing, is by this instance irrefragably overthrown.

*Ans.* 4. That way of proving, which was rejected by the Prophets and godly Jews, by Christ and by the Apostles, is not to be approved, much less preferred before that way which they approved and used; but this way of proving the truth of a Doctrine by Tradition from their next Ancestors and the Testimony of the present Church was rejected by the Prophets &c. and by Christ

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(a) *Quare Ecclesie Catholicae fidem ac veritatem & tenere debemus firmiter & docere, & per omnia Evangelica & Apostolica praecepta rationem divinae dispensationis atq; unitatis ostendere. Epist. 73. ad Julianum.*

(b) *Nos veritati consuetudinem jungimus ab initio hoc tenentes quod a Christo & ab Apostolo traditum est. Epist. 79. Cypr. p. 164. edit. Rigalt.*

and the Apostles : *Ergo*, it is not now to be approved. For the *Minor* (in which all the doubt lies) it consists of two Branches : the first relating to the old Testament, the second to the New.

The first is: That this way was disowned by the Prophets and godly Jews under the old Testament. It is true, some of the Jews did own this popish opinion as you may read *Jer.* 44. 17. But the Prophets were of another perswasion, *Ezek.* 20. 18. *Walk not in the statutes of your Fathers.* And from Tradition they used to send their people to the *Law and Testimony*, *Isa.* 8. 20. And the godly Kings of *Judah* did not make Tradition (as the Papists do) but the written Law (as the Protestants do) the rule of their reformation. Thus *David* 1 *Chron.* 16. 40. —to do according to all that is written in the Law. Thus *Hezekiah* 2 *Chron.* 3. 1. he did all, as it is written in the Law of the Lord. So *Josiah* 2 *Chron.* 34. 30, 31. and 35, 12. The like did *Ezra* long after, *Ezra* 6. 18. and *Nehemiah* chap. 8. *They dwelt in Booths as it is written.* Here Scripture recovers what Tradition had lost, for though God had commanded this, yet since the dayes of *Joshua* they had not done so, *vers.* 17. By all which we evidently discern how different their opinion was from this of the Papists, and how little confidence they put in Tradition. *Josiah* would not so much as make *Hezekiah's* reformation his rule, nor *Hezekiah* take his pattern from *Jehoshaphat's* reformation, but still every one had immediate recourse to the written Word ; for it seems it was a Language that these Holy men understood not, that Scripture was a corrupt Writing, a leaden rule, a dumb Master,

§. 7. There is indeed one Objection against the consequence from the Jews to the Christians, and from the Old Testament to the New : I shall give it to you in the words of one of the acutest of our Adversaries, *i. e.*

Mr.

Mr. White, *The Law of the Jews was delivered in Tables of Stone, and the volumn of the Law, to which it is expressly opposed that God will write the Law of Christians in their hearts<sup>a</sup>.*

I answer, 1. The words are not to be understood absolutely (as they sound) but comparatively, not as if they did wholly deny that the Mosaical Law was written in the Heart (for that is affirmed in other places, as *Deut. 30. 6. The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed,*) or as if they did affirm that the Christian Law was written only in mens Hearts, and not in Paper (which the Papists themselves dare not assert) but only it is a comparative Expression, like that, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice, Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach,* i. e. principally and primarily, for else the one as well as the other was enjoyed by God. And so it is here implied, that the Christians Law should be written more eminently upon the Hearts of Christians, than it ordinarily was upon the Hearts of the Jews, and that it should be writ in a more legible Character.

*Answ. 2.* If we examine in whose hearts this Christian Law is written, we shall find it concerns not the Tradition of the Church by which all things are to be regulated. For I demand of them, was this promise made and performed to all that are called Christians, or only to the elect and sincere Christians, or only to the Pope and Bishops? If they say the first, then one Christian as well as another is furnished with this rule of all Controversies, and consequently as able to judge of con-

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(a) *Certissimum est legem Judæorum Tabulis lapideis & Deuteronomii volumine traditam esse, cui opponitur expresse in Prophetis Deum legem Christianorum in cordibus fidelium scripturum. De fide Tract. 1. S. 6.*

troverfies; then Lay-men and Minifters have this Law equally written in their Hearts: if they fay the fecond, that is, only the elect and fincere Chriftians (as indeed it is,) then it muft be fomething elfe befide Tradition, which is no lefs known to the hypocritical pretender than to the fincere profeffor of Chriftianity. If they fay the third, That this law was written only in the hearts of the Pope and Bifhops met in Council, (as what is there fo ridiculous, which fome of our Adverfaries will not fay, rather than confefs their errours, and give glory to God?) they are evidently confuted by the words of the place, *Jer. 31. 34. They fhall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every one his Brother, faying, know the Lord for they fhall all know me from the leaft of them unto the greateft—for I will forgive their iniquity.* And befides Mr. White himfelf faith, this Law is written only in *Cordibus fidelium*, in the hearts of the Faithful: Now in what Dictionary we fhall find *fidelis* to be tranflated Atheift, Sodomit, Magician, &c. (Epithetes not without caufe given to Popes and Popifh Bifhops by their own Authors) I would gladly be informed.

*Anfw. 3.* If we enquire what that is, which is here faid to be written in their hearts, we fhall fee Mr. White's invention was better than his judgment or his confcience: with what Spectacles do thefe men read this Writing in the heart, that tell us this was the Doctrine of Tranfubftantiation, Indulgences, Invocation of Saints, Popes Supremacy, the Churches infallibility? But you muft know, though this Writing was from God, yet the interpretation belongs to the Pope, whole Will ftands for his reafon, and his word for a Law: But if we confult the Prophet, if with the Popes good leave God may be his own Interpreter, He tels you this was the Infcription, *γινώσκει Κύριον, Know the Lord.* The knowledge of God, *Jer. 31. 33.* and the fear of God, *Jer. 32. 39, 40.* and

And this Law written in the heart was so far from being appointed by God for a rule to walk by ( much less was it to juggle out the word, as the Papists now abuse it ) that the use of this was only to help them to make the word their rule, *Ezek 26 27. I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes*: Hence that in *Is. 59. 21. My spirit that is in you, and my words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth*. So this objection being discharged, the consequence remains in full force, and Traditions being disapproved under the old Testament cannot be approved under the New: But I shall more fully prove that in the next branch, which is this.

§. 8. 2. This way of proving the truth of Doctrines by verbal Tradition is disallowed by Christ and the Apostles. He knows nothing of the Pharisees, and indeed but little of the New Testament, that knows not that this was the great Doctrine of the Pharisees; and from their School the Papists had this Doctrine of the certainty of Tradition: so little reason had *Du Moulin* to write a Book about the novelty of Popery, when diverse of their Doctrines have such a venerable Antiquity, that they are as old as the Pharisees. No wonder the Church of *Rome* hath diverse Doctrines that Christ never delivered to them, for they had a great part of the leaven of the Pharisees left them for a Legacy: And from them they had their bold expressions, by which they advance Tradition above the Scripture. The Author of the Book called *עמורי גוריה* hath this saying, *Think not that the written Law is the Foundation of our Faith, but the Law of Oral Tradition*. And again in the Book *Juchas*: p. 158. *Without this oral Law (of Tradition) the whole law would be in darkness*: and again, *all those things which our Rabbins taught us we are equally to believe as the Law of Moses*. But this is so known, that it is frivolous to multiply

testimonies of this kind. The footsteps of this principle you may discern in diverse places of the New Testament. They made the Tradition of the Fathers the rule of their Faith, *Math. 15. 2. Why do thy disciples transgress the Tradition of the Elders?* S. Paul mentions it as one of his Pharisaical errors, *That he was exceedingly zealous of the Traditions of his Fathers, Gal. 1. 14.* And S. Peter speaks of it as a part or effect of their Redemption by Christ, *that they were delivered from a vain conversation received by Tradition from the Fathers, 1 Peter 1.* This sufficiently shews what their opinion was. Now let us hear what reflection Christ and the Apostles made on it: And there you shall find that which would end the controversie with ingenuous Adversaries, *viz.* That whereas the Romanists tell us that the deserting of Tradition is the true cause and spring of all Errors, on the contrary our Saviour makes this the Fountain of their errors, their forsaking the Scripture, not their receding from the Tradition of their Ancestors, *Mar. 22. 29. Ye erre, not knowing the Scriptures,* we are beholden to the Papists that they do not say, there is a corruption in the Text, and Scripture is put in for Tradition: for surely if Christ had been of the mind of these Gentlemen, he never had a fitter opportunity to utter it than now, for the Sadducees were noted as enemies to Tradition; And the Doctrine of the Resurrection was but darkly delivered in Scripture, at least in the Pentateuch, and more plainly by Tradition. So now or never was the time for Christ to say to the Sadducees, (as doubtless Mr. White would, if he had been present, and Christ should, if M. Whites Argument be good) *You erre, because you take no heed to the Traditions of your Ancestors.* But here is not a Syllable about that, but all is cast upon their not knowing the Scriptures. Thus in the resolution of that great controversie concerning the *Messias*, Christ doth not



not confute the Jewes, nor stablish the Truth from Tradition ( though there was eminent occasion for it at that time, there being such a Tradition then risen amongst them, that the time of the coming of the *Messias* was at hand, *Daniel's* Weeks being nigh expired, and with it a general expectation of him ) but from Scripture Christ proves himself to be the true *Messias* by several Arguments, by the Testimony of *John* ( who was a prophet, yea more than a prophet ) by his Fathers voice from Heaven, by his miracles, and above all by the Scripture, how came Christ to omit that which ( if those men do not deceive us ) was more considerable than all the rest, *viz.* Tradition, and the testimony of the present Church. A strange oversight, you will say, but it seems it was a discovery denied to Christ, and all the Apostles, and reserved to these last times. Answerable to this was the practice of the godly *Bereans*, who did examine *St. Paul's* Doctrine not by Tradition ( as the Papists do ) but the Scripture, *Act. 17. 11.* And *St. Paul* himself evidenceth the soundness of his Doctrine, not by its conformity with Tradition ( which our Adversaries lay such stress upon, that *S. Clara* with several others affirm, that they receive the Scriptures only so far as they agree with Tradition (a), but by its consonancy to the Scriptures saying, *That he witnessed none other thing than what was in Moses and the Prophets, Acts 26. 22. and Acts 24. 14, 15.* So then, the question now is, which is the more rational way to resolve a Christians doubt and

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(a) Prodiit quidam Dialogus à Dōcto amico meo compositus—  
Solemniter Parisiis approbatus à Doctoribus deputatis à Sorbona—  
qui expresse asserit, Ecclesiam ideo recipere scripturas, quia & in quan-  
tum sunt conformes fidei quam ab Apostolis per Traditiones accepit, non è  
converso. Et hactenus sine dubio certissimè, *System. cap. 11. in initio*

ground his Faith, whether that which hath had the approbation of all the Holy men of God in both Testaments, or the ingenious device of their witty Doctors, that come with their *quintum Evangelium* into the World, that is, whether Scripture or Tradition. I know one thing will be said, that the Apostles did urge Traditions as well as Scriptures; to this purpose we oft hear of that 2 *Thef. 2. 15. Hold the Tradition which ye have been taught, whether by word or our Epistle.* To which I answer briefly.

1. That if the Papists can demonstrate any of their Traditions to be indeed Apostolical (as these were) we shall receive them, if conformable to Scripture; but if they be dissonant from Scripture, we have commission from St. Paul to renounce them, though they be either of Apostolical or Angelical original, *Gal. 18. 9.*

2. The Argument I confess is right of the Romish stamp, *viz.* The *Thessalonians* were bound to receive what they heard immediately from S. Pauls mouth in such things as for the substance of them were contained in the Scripture; therefore we are now bound to receive all those Traditions which the Church of Rome tell us they had from those, that had them from those, that had them from those, that told them their Ancestors were told by their Ancestors, that some of their Ancestors had it from Paul 1600 years ago, -- *risum teneatis amici.* This may serve for the fourth Answer.

§. 9. *Ans. 5.* If this Doctrine be true, Scripture-proof is not necessary for any point in Religion (for it asserts the sufficiency of Tradition in it self, and without the Scripture: ) but Scripture-proof is necessary for confirmation of points in Religion. This I might prove from Scripture, but that hath been done already in the former Answer, therefore I shall here confute this Argument of Tradition by Tradition and the testimony of the Fathers,



that *Constantine* was a better Emperor than Doctor, whereas in this particular *Theodoret* assures us, that the whole Synod did highly approve of this saying, nor did any of the Antients ever condemn him for it. And indeed the practice of the Synod shews their approbation of the Speech, and consequently gives us another Argument, for they determined the controversy according to the Scriptures saies *Ambrose* (a): and *Athanasius* too, whose words are these, *The Bishops congregated at Nice, collecting together all things they could out of Scripture, to defend their opinion, they affirmed that the Son was consubstantial to the Father* (b). And *Bellarmino* himself confesseth it: *The Council of Nice, when they defined the Son to be consubstantial to the Father, they drew their Conclusion out of the Scripture* (c). Notable is that place of *Chrysostome*, because it acquaints us with his own judgment, and the judgment of the Christians of that Age, *If any thing be asserted (saith he) without Scripture, the mind of the Hearer wavers—But when Scripture comes, that confirms the speakers words and settles the Hearer's mind* (d). *Tertullian* thus confutes the opinion of *Hermogenes*, that things were made of præexistent matter, with, *I never read it, let Hermogenes shew where it is written, or else let him fear the woe denounced against those that add to the Scriptures* (e). And again, *I do*

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(a) *De fide ad Gratianum lib. 1. cap. 8.* (b) *Niceæ congregati Episcopi collectis in unum quæ ex sacris literis ad sententiam suam tenendam facerent—filium consubstantialem esse asseverant. In Epistola ad Episcolum.*

(c) *Concilium Nicenum cum definivit filium Patri esse consubstantialem conclusionem deduxit ex Scripturis. De Conciliis lib. 2. 12.*

(d) *Εάν τι πρὸς ὁμοῦς λέγεται ἢ διδόνται ἢ ἀπαρτίζονται—*in *Psal. 95—*nuquam adhuc legi, c. *Scriptum esse doceat Hermogenis officina. Si non est scriptum, timeat ne illud adjicientibus, aut detrahentibus destinatum. con. Hermogenem cap. 22.*

not receive what thou bringest of thy own without the Scripture<sup>a</sup>. And again, Take away from Hereticks the things they have in common with Heathens, that they may refer their questions to Scripture alone, and they can never stand (b). But the Papists are of another mind, for if you will believe them, if Scripture alone must judge Controversies, Heresies will never fall. Theodoret professeth he was not so bold as to assert any thing wherein the Scripture was silent<sup>c</sup>. Thus Origen. It is necessary that we call in the Testimony of Scripture, for without this our Expositions have no credit<sup>d</sup>. Austin is most full and plain, I will mention but one place, Whether they have the Church they cannot shew but from the Canonical Books of Scripture. And yet there is no question wherein Tradition seems more pertinent, and where the Papists urge it with more vehemency. I might add a thousand pregnant places more, but either these or none will suffice to prove that the Antients did judge Scripture proof necessary for the confirmation of any Doctrine in Religion, which the Romanists now judge not necessary. The Fathers pretended tradition for their opinion then, and the Papists pretend it now: Either tradition deceived the Fathers then, or it deceives Papists now: Either will serve our turn to shew the Fallibility of Tradition. If it be said there are no less express testimonies alledged by the Papists on the behalf of Tradition, and why should not they be received as well as those on the behalf of the Scripture.

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(a) Non recipio quod extra Scripturam de tuo inferis. De carne Christi cap. 7. (b) Ausfer hereticis quae cum Ethnicis sapiunt, ut de solis Scripturae quaestiones suas fiant, & stare non possunt. De Resurrectione Carnis cap. 3. (c) εἴ ποῦ τις αὐτὸ δεῖξει ἢ ὅτι ἐκ τῆς συντάξεως τῆς βίβλου. Dialog. 2. (d) utrum ipsi Ecclesiam teneant non nisi Divinarum scripturarum Canonico libris ostendant. de unitate Ecclesiae cap. 16.

I Answer; 1. If the Fathers do in some places assert the sufficiency of proof from Tradition, and in other places the necessity of Scripture proof; these assertions being directly contrary one to another, it invalidates their Authority in matters of Religion: For so say the Lawyers most justly and truly, *Testis pugnancia dicens fidem non facit.*

2. But upon inquiry it will be found in the places cited for Tradition (especially if you compare them with those alledged for Scripture) that they do plead Tradition only as a secondary Argument to confirm that Faith which is grounded upon Scripture, but it is as clear as the Sun, that they ever made Tradition strike fail to the Scripture, and made no scruple of deserting Tradition when the evidence of Scripture Arguments stood on the other side.

*Asw. 6.* The Romanists themselves are undeniable instances of the vanity of their own Argument. They tells us Tradition cannot deceive us: Why, Tradition hath deceived them. There are diverse contradictory opinions maintained in the Church of *Rome*, about 300 are reckoned out of *Bellarmino*: the Dissenters, though never so implacably divided amongst themselves, do agree in this, that they believe nothing but what hath come to them by Tradition from their Fathers, & so from the Apostles, then certainly either Tradition hath deceived some of them, or both the parts of a contradiction may be true. I shall not launch forth into the sea of Romish contradictions, nor take notice of petty differences amongst obscure Authors, but shall instance in two material points, *viz.* the Doctrine of God's grace, and mans will, and the appurtenances as they are controverted between the *French* and *Italian* Papists: In both of them, it is as clear as the Sun, that both parties pretend Tradition. Now the Trumpet of Tradition gives an uncertain

tain sound, for Tradition tels the Jesuites this is truth, That the will is determined to good actions, not by Gods grace, but by its own inclination and agency: Tradition tels the Dominicans and Jansenists that this is a gross falsity. So for the Church if you inquire in whom Supreme Authority and Infallibility resides (for that is the great question.) Tradition tels the Jesuites, it is in the Pope; Tradition not long since told the Councils of *Basle* and *Constance* that it was in a Council, not in the Pope, and so it tells many of the French Doctors at this day. And ( I will tell you a thing in your Ear ) both these are Apostolical Traditions, though you and I think they are directly contrary. It is true that St. James saith, *No Fountain can yield both Salt water and fresh, Cha. 3. 8. 12.* But that is to be understood only of the Fountain of the Scripture, but the Fountain of Tradition can yield both Salt and fresh, both bitter and sweet. You may well allow Tradition to be Infallible, for you see it can work wonders, and reconcile contradictions. If this seem strange to you, you may expect the proof of it in an Appendix to the next Edition of Mr. Whites Apology for Tradition, demonstrating, that *Contradictoria possunt esse simul vera*, to be dedicated to the Defenders of Transubstantiation. But to return: What say our Masters to this difficulty? why, I will faithfully acquaint you where their strength lies, and what their pretences are: I find three things which are or may with some colour be said for them to safeguard the Infallibility of Tradition against this dreadful shock.

2. They say these are only Doctrines ventilated in Schools not of any great consequence to Christians: Thus the controversies between the Jesuites and Dominicans about Gods free grace and mans free will ( they say ) are but Scholasticall niceties, wherein the substance of Religion is not at all concerned: So for the point of

Supremacy

Supremacy and Infallibility it is no great matter, The dissenters only seek out the decider of Points of Doctrine, that is, by whose mouth we are to know, which be our Articles of Faith, whether by the Popes, or Councils, or both, which is not much material (saith Rushworths second Edition Dial. 3. §. 9.) to our purpose what ever the truth be, supposing we acknowledge no Articles of Faith but such as have descended to us from Christ and his Apostles.

For Answer, I would know whether a private Christian can infallibly know what are those Articles of Faith which came from Christ and his Apostles without the decision of Pope or Council, or not. If they say he can know it, then it followes that private Christians may be infallible of themselves, and consequently there is no necessity of Pope or Councils, for what need any more then infallibility? If they say he cannot, then an infallible guide, judge, and interpreter is necessary to Tradition as well as to Scripture, and without this Tradition cannot make us infallible, and consequently, if it be doubtfull and disputable who this Judge is, it must be also doubtfull whether the Tradition be right and therefore Tradition cannot make me infallible. It is an audacity beyond parallel that they who make it so material as that they assert we have no certainty in our Faith for want of a decider of points of Doctrine, and make no scruple of sending us to Hell for want of such a Decider, should say this amongst themselves is not material, for (as to use and benefit) it is all one to have no decider of controversies, and not to be agreed who it is according to that known maxime of the Lawyers, *Idem est non apparere & non esse*. As for the others points between the Jesuites and Dominicans, how material they are we will take their own judgments. If we may believe either one or other of them, the points are of great moment. If you ask the Jesuits or Dominicans their opinion of the Jesuiticall Doctrine,



Doctrine, they tell you that it is the very poison of the Pelagian Heresy, yea, it is worse then Pelagianism, that they are contempters of Grace, such as rob God of his honour taking half of it to themselves, that it is here disputed, Whether God alone be God, or whether the will of man be a kind of inferiour, yet (in part) an Independent Deity. These are Mr. Whites words in his *Sonus Buccinae*. quast. Theolog. in Epist. & in parag. 7.

And for the Jesuites they are not one jot behind hand with them in their censure of the Dominican Doctrine, which (say the Jesuites) brings back the stoical paradox, robs God of the Glory of his goodness, makes God a lyar and the Author of sin; and yet when we tell them of these divisions, the breach is presently healed, these savages are grown tame, their differences trivial, and only some School-niceties, wherein Faith is not concerned: And now both Stoicks and Pelagians are grown Orthodox, and the grace, glory, sovereignty and holiness of God, are matters but of small concernment: and so it seems they are to them, else they durst not so shamelessly dally with them: But it is usuall with them to make the greatest points of Faith like Counters, which in computation sometimes stands for pounds, sometimes for pence, as interest and occasion require. And it is worth Observation, These very point of difference when they fall out among Protestants, between Calvin and Arminius, they are represented by our Adversaries as very material and weighty differences, but when they come to their share they are of no moment.

2. It may be said, Tradition may deceive some of the Romanists but not all: Now it is the Church which is said to be Infallible, not particular Doctors. For Answer, let it be remembred that I am not now speaking of the deception of some few private Doctors, but the points alledged are controverted amongst as learned and devout

devout men ( as they call Devotion ) as ever the Church of Rome had; here is Order against Order, University against University, Nation against Nation, all of them pretending Tradition for their contrary opinions with greatest confidence and eagerness. Premising this, I Answer, That Tradition which hath deceived thousands of the best and Learnedst Romanists may deceive ten thousand: That which deceives the Jesuites in some points may deceive the Dominicans in others, the Franciscans in others. If it deceive the French Papists in some points, it may deceive the Italians in other, and so is not Infallible in any: Or else, what bounds will these men set to the Infallibility of Tradition? Will they say Tradition is only Infallible in *France*, and those of the same perswasion, who plead Tradition for the Supremacy of the Council above the Pope? Or will they say the Infallibility of Tradition is kept beyond the Alpes among the Italian Doctors, who urge Tradition for the Popes Supremacy above Councils? But what security will they give us, That the Fallibility of Tradition cannot pass over the Alpes, and get from one side to the other? Indeed Infallibility may happily be a tender piece not able to get over those snowy Mountains: But Fallibility can travel to all parts and at all times: In short, it being certain that Tradition doth deceive thousands of them, it may deceive the rest. Nor can this be any way prevented, but by pretending the promise of Infallibility; but this is Heterogeneous to the present enquiry, and they are now pleading for another Infallibility from the nature of Tradition, and that is hereby disproved? and for the fiction of a promise; I have discovered that before.

But the third and last pretence is most frequent; That however in lesser points they may be mistaken and divided, yet they are agreed in all that is *de fide*, in all points  
of

of Faith, that is, in such things as have been decided by Pope or Council: I answer in few words, and thus I reinforce my discourse. If Tradition might deceive them before such a Decision, it might deceive them afterwards, because the Decision of a Council doth not alter the nature and property of Tradition. It is true, (according to the opinion of some Papists) such a decision of a point may cause him to believe a Doctrine which before he doubted of or denied, because he may judge the Churches Authority so infallible and obliging to him, that Tradition with Scripture and all other things must strike fail to it: But the decision of a Council cannot make that a Tradition, which was no Tradition, nor can it hinder, but that Tradition did deceive me before, and consequently might deceive me afterwards. For instance: If the Pope determine the controverſie between the Jansenists and Jesuites about Predestination, Grace, Freewill, &c. his determination in favour of the Jesuites possibly may change some of the Jansenists judgments, because peradventure it is their principle that the Pope is the Infallible Judge of Controversies, to whom they must all submit. But (supposing that the Pope decides according to the verity of Tradition, and that must always be supposed) a thousand of his decisions cannot hinder, but that all the Jansenists and Dominicans had until that time been deceived by Tradition. So it seem Tradition in that point was Fallible for above 1600 years together after Christ, and now upon the Popes determination *An. 1653.* it is *momento turbinis* grown Infallible; but neither will this do their work; for the nature of Tradition being the same, either it must be infallible in the foregoing ages, or else it must now be acknowledged Fallible.

§. 11. *Ans. 7.* Although this one Answer might suffice to all their perplexing arguments tending to shew the impossibility

possibility of any mutation or corruption where Tradition is pretended, *or*, that it's apparent, there have been several mutations and corruptions where Tradition is owned: As it was a sufficient confutation of that Philosophers knotty Arguments alledged to prove that there was no motion, when his Adversary walked before him; though happily the other brought some Arguments that might puzzle an able disputant to Answer, (which in that point is not hard to do:) Or if any man should urge a subtle Argument to prove the impossibility of Sins coming into the World, because neither could the understanding be first deceived, nor the will corrupted without the deception of the understanding, it were sufficient to alledge the universal experience of mankind to the contrary: So the undoubted experience of manifest corruptions in the Church so called, which no man that hath the use of his Eyes, and exercise of his reason or conscience can be ignorant of, might justly silence all the cavils of wanton wits pretending to prove the impossibility of it: yet because I will use all possible means to convince them, if God peradventure may give some of them repentance that they may recover themselves from the snare of the Devil, I shall proceed farther and easily evince the possibility of corruption in that case, and point at some of those many fountains of corruption, from whence the streams of error might flow into the Church; notwithstanding the pretence of, and adherence to the Doctrine of Tradition. And because the answerer of the *L. Falkland* reduceth all to two branches: If (saith he) a company of Christians pretending Tradition for all they teach, could teach falsehoods, then some age must either have erred in understanding their Ancestors, or have joyned to deceive their Posterity, but neither of these are credible. I shall apply my Answer to him, first in general, and then to the several branches of his Argument.

§. 12. In general the whole Argument is built upon a false supposition, as if the misunderstanding or deceit must needs come in as it were in one spring tide, as if it were impossible that the Tares of error should be sown in the Church while men slept and never dreamed of it. The basis of this Argument lies in an assertion of the impossibility of that, which the nature of it shews to be most rational and probable; and the experience of all ages shews to be most usual, *i. e.* that corruption of Doctrines and manners (for in this both are alike) should creep in by degrees. As *Jason's* ship was wasted (so Truth was lost) one piece after another. *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*. Who knows not that errors crept into the Jewish Church gradually; and why might it not be so in the Christian Church? We know very well, *Posito uno absurdo sequuntur multa*. One error will breed an hundred, yet all its Children are not born in one day; As *St. Paul* tells us the mystery of iniquity began to work in his daies, but was not brought to perfection till many ages after. The Apostle hath sufficiently confuted this senseless fancy, whilst he tells us that Heresy *ears like a canker or a gangreen, i. e.* by degrees, and is not worst at first, but *encreasesh in more and more malignity*, 2 Tim. 2. 16, 17. As that cloud, which at first appearance was no bigger than a mans hand, did gradually outspread the whole face of the Heavens, so those opinions which at first were only the sentiments of the lesser part, might by degrees improve and become the greater, or at least by the favour of Princes, or power & learning of their advocates, become the stronger, until at last, like *Moses's* Rod they devoured the other Rods, & monopolizing to themselves the liberty of writing and pressing their Doctrins, and suppressing all contrary Discourses and Treatises, their Doctrins being proposed by them as Catholick doctrins, and the Doctrins of their own and former ages (which

was frequently pretended by several Hereticks) and this proposition not contradicted by considerable persons, (which in some ages were few, and those easily byassed) or the contradiction being speedily suppressed, (which is very possible and hath been usual) it could not probably fall out otherwise, but that their opinion should be transmitted to their Successours for the Faith of their Age. Rome was not built in a day, neither in a civil, nor in a Spiritual notion. And *de facto*, that corruptions did creep into the Church of Rome by degrees, hath been so fully demonstrated, that I need only point the Reader to those Authors who have done this work, especially to *Morneys* mystery of Iniquity, and the excellent defence of it in French by *Rivet* against the cavils of *Coffrean*.

I answer particularly, and in opposition to the first branch, I lay down this position: That the following Age or the Major part of those called Christians, might easily mistake the mind of the foregoing Age, of which many rational accounts may be given. 1. There was no certain way whereby (for example) the particular Christians of the third Age, might infallibly know the Doctrines which were delivered by the whole Church of the second Age. Remember the question is not how probably they might believe, but how infallibly they might know it; for nothing will serve the Romanists turn short of infallibility. It is true; the Christians of *Antioch* might know what their Fathers delivered to them there, and they of *Ephesus* what was there delivered, but no Christians could without miracles infallibly know what were the Doctrines delivered to the Christians in those innumerable places where the Gospel had got footing. Hence then I offer this Argument: Either this is sufficient for the infallibility of Tradition, that the Christians in several Cities and places did understand what their Ancestors taught in such places, and would not de-

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ceive their posterity in it, or it is not sufficient, but it is necessary that Traditions should be compared, and the Truth discovered in a general Council. If they say the former, then they assert the Infallibility, not only of the Church or Bishop of *Rome*, or of a general Council, or of the Catholick Church, but of every particular City: And to say truth, either this plea of Tradition is fallacious and absurd, or every particular Church is Infallible. For (to use their own words) if the Christians (suppose of *Ephesus*) could be deceived, then either they did not understand the Doctrine of their Ancestors there delivered, or they did willingly deceive their posterity; but neither of these were possible: *Ergo*, the Church of *Ephesus* was infallible. If they will eat their own words, (as they will do any thing sooner than retract their errors and return to the Truth,) and say the Church of *Ephesus* might misunderstand their Ancestors or deceive their posterity, then so might the Church of *Antioch* and that of *Alexandria*, and so the rest, and what then becomes of Infallibility? If they say the latter, *viz.* That there is a necessity of a general Council to compare Traditions, and declare the Truth, then they are desired to remember, that as yet there had been no general Council, and consequently no infallibility, and therefore in that Age there might be a misunderstanding, yea many mistakes. What else will they say? will they say that a Christian might infallibly know the Truth by travelling to all places and companies of Christians, and hearing it from their own mouths? This, though it might give satisfaction to such a Christian, yet it could not satisfy others who had no such evidence. Or will they say the Christians knew it by Testimonies received from every Church, and particular recitals of their Traditions? Why, such Testimonials are not so much as pretended to have been required, or given, and if they had been

given, yet that could satisfy none, but those few eye-witnesses of them. It remains therefore that there was no way whereby the Christians of the third Age might be assured of the genuine Traditions of the second, (which was the thing to be proved.) And the solidity and satisfactoriness of this one Answer, (if there were no more) appears plainly from hence, that the great Architects of this device make it essential to such a Tradition that it come from all the Apostles, so Mr. White informs us, since all Catholics, when they speak of Tradition deliberately and exactly, define it to be a Doctrine universally taught by the Apostles, we may safely conclude, where two Apostles teach differently, neither is Tradition. *Apol. for Trad. Encount. 6.* And elsewhere his reply to our instance of the Tradition of communicating infants is this, *That it was a Tradition begun by some Apostles, not all, in some countries, not all. Encounter 2.* Hence then I thus argue, The following Christians could have no assurance what Doctrine was taught by all the Apostles without a general Council of all the Churches, severally taught by the several Apostles; but such a general Council there was none in the third Age: therefore the third age could not infallibly understand the Apostolical Traditions delivered in the second, which was the thing to be proved.

§. 14. 2. There are many instances which may be given of mens mis-understanding the Doctrines of the preceding age. We have one instance among our selves, concerning the judgement of the Church of England of the next preceding Age in the Quinquarticular points: The favourers of *Arminius* his Doctrines tell us, that she maintained their Doctrines; Their Adversaries tell us, she held the contrary: and there are Books written, and Arguments urged on both sides. He that doubts of this, let him look into Mr. *Prin* on the one side, and Dr. *Heylin* on the other. And why might it not be thus



in former ages? And seeing there are great mistakes daily committed, and fresh disputes managed, about the opinions of those Authors, who have left us their mind (as plainly as words can make it) in books, which are always present to our perusal; how can it be sense for a man to say, that one may infallibly know their mind by a transient hearing of them? What tedious controversies are there about the judgement of St. *Augustine*, and others of the Fathers, in sundry points of great moment, wherein they have as fully explained themselves as any Preacher can do, or *use*eth to do? Suppose now the Fathers preach the same things and words which they have left us in writings, (and diverse of their works were no other than their Sermons) can any man without non-sense say, that the diligent Reader may be mistaken, and the attentive Hearer is infallible? We all know the five Propositions of *Jansenius* condemned lately at *Rome*. The Jansenists deny that to be the sense of *Jansenius* his words, which the Pope and the Jesuites affix to them: both parties are agreed in his words, (which seldom happens in Oral Traditions, and consequently make the argument stronger) yet they differ in the sense, which one side saith is Heretical, the other aver it is innocent. Why might not in like manner several parties, though it be supposed they perfectly remembred the words delivered by *Peter* in a Sermon 20 years before, (which I would not grant but that it is a work of charity to help the weak) what hinders but that they may understand them in contrary senses, and so derive from them contrary conclusions, and yet both pretend to assert nothing but the doctrine delivered from S. *Peters* mouth? Are there not sharp contentments among Popish Authors about the opinion of the Council of *Trent* in diverse points, and that too among those who were present upon the place, and heard their debates? And will these men still undertake to prove that

Snow is black, or (which is equivalent to it) that it was impossible to do that which is usually done, viz. to mistake the doctrines of the former age? Let us consider one Scripture instance. *S. Paul* tells us, *a man is justified by faith without the works of the law*, and that *Abraham was thus justified*: the Papists remember the words, but mistake the sense. Now put case *S. Paul* had preached the same words (as he did unquestionably the same thing) which he wrote, who can say (that hath any care what he saith) that they that mistook the sense of those words when they read them in a book, could not as easily have mistaken them, when they heard them from his mouth? Especially if it be considered, that *S. James* preached, and wrote a Doctrine in words seemingly contrary to these. My Question now is, what should hinder, that the several hearers of those Apostles, perfectly remembring their various expressions, might not derive contrary Traditions from them? why might not the one side have apprehended *Paul* as excluding all works in the Protestant sense from Justification, and the other have understood *James* (as the Papists at this day do) as conjoyning faith and works in justification? And if this cannot be denied, then it follows unavoidably, that errors may come into the Church under pretence of Tradition, which was the thing to be proved. Another instance we have in the Sadducees, whose error is reported to have come into the world under the colour of Tradition: for when *Antigonus Sochans* a Master in *Israel*, was teaching, that if there was no future reward, no immortality of the Soul, no resurrection of the body, yet we ought to serve God: his Scholar *Sadok* so misunderstood him, that he broached a new doctrine, and turned his Hypothetical Proposition into a Categorical, and asserted, that there was no resurrection of the body, nor immortality of the soul, &c. And will these men pawn their souls on it, that it was impossible for the Apostles

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hearers to commit the same mistakes in the doctrines they heard from their mouths? Hath not *S. John* given us an instance of easiness and earliness of such mistakes in *Joh. 21.* where, upon that expression of Christ's concerning *John*, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* the Evangelist observes, that a Tradition was delivered among the Brethren that that Disciple should not dye, *vers. 22, 23.* In a word, if it be so familiar a thing (as daily experience shews) for common hearers to mis-understand the words and mistake the sense of a preacher, when they are but newly come from him, and all things are fresh in their memory, what a desperate assertion is this, that a man can certainly remember the words, and infallibly understand the sense of those Sermons he heard from his former ministers it may be twenty years ago? And if it be granted (as it cannot be denied) that the hearers of the second age might mistake the doctrines delivered by the teachers of the foregoing age in some things; why might not the hearers of the third age mistake their predecessors in other things, and so of the fourth, and further, until at last the systeme of Divinity came to that ruthless habit in which it is delivered in the Church of *Rome*? To clear this further, consider what I have already intimated.

*§. 15. 3.* The words of our predecessors may be remembered, & yet the sense wonderfully perverted. Now as it is not words, but the sense of them wherein the soul lies, so all or most of the controversies in the Church are about the sense of words. And in this, Scripture and Tradition are equally lyable to the same fate, the words may be agreed on, and the controversie arise solely about the sense of them. For example, the Tradition of the first age was this, That God alone was to be worshipped, not men, not Angels, not Images. Nor is it possible that any man should express his mind more plainly and positively than

the Fathers unanimously did in this particular. Now comes the next age, and they receive indeed this Tradition, but then here ariseth a question, In what sense they said God alone was to be worshipped? St. *Austin* takes it up, and saith, they meant that God alone was to be worshipped with *Latria*, and the Saints with *Dulia*. And although it is evident enough, that by *Dulia* St. *Austin* meant nothing but a Civil worship (because he ascribes it to the living as well as the dead, and when he takes *Dulia* for a religious worship, he appropriates it to God *a*.) yet this unhappy distinction falling into the hands of his perverse successors, gave rise to another controversy, viz. in what sense S. *Austin* ascribes *Dulia* to the creature? And thus, as in the throwing of a stone upon the water, one circle begets another; so doth one controversy engender another, and every one of them is a convincing evidence of the fallibility of Tradition. Take one instance more. S. *Gregory* the great Pope, delivers this doctrine to posterity, as his doctrine, and the doctrine of his Ancestors, that *whosoever* calls himself *Universal Bishop*, is proud, profane, abominable, wicked, blasphemous, and the forerunner of *Antichrist*. This is confessed. Now *Gregory's* successors have an itch after the name and thing of *Universal Bishop*: in order to this they start a question (where indeed there was none to men that had either science or conscience,) viz. In what sense *Gregory* condemned this Title of *Universal Bishop*? For this is a *Maxime*, let the Pope speak what words he please, the sense is always orthodox. Oh, say these *Sophi*, *John* of *Constantinople* called himself *Universal Bishop*, as if he were the only Bishop, and all others but his *Vicars*, and that they must not so much as have the name of *Bishop*, a sense that poor *John* never

dreamed of, nor any man of that age (for then surely *Anastafius* the Patriarch of *Antioch*, and *Mauritius* the Emperour would never have written to *Gregory*, (as they did) that it was but a frivolous thing that *John* desired: ) so now by this ingenious device, here comes in a new, contrary, and that too (forsooth) a Catholick Tradition, viz. That the Pope is, and ever ought to be, and ever was Universal Bishop. But whether the Popish gloss be sound or rotten, it equally serves my purpose, which is to shew how controversies may arise about the sense, and errors come in at that door, though Tradition hath made a true report of the words, which it seldom doth. I might multiply instances, but these will suffice for a candid Adversary, and others nothing will suffice.

§. 16. 4. This will be made more probable, if you consider the quality of some former ages, which might and did give great advantage to error to creep in under the mask of Tradition, and consequently evinceth how easie it was for one age to mistake the doctrines of the preceding age. To this end consider with me the condition of the tenth age, of which I shall desire you to judge according to the testimony of their own Authors. The words of *Baronius* are these. *In the nine hundredth year of Christ, the third Indiction, a new age begins, which by reason of its asperity and barrenness of good is wont to be called the Iron Age; from the deformity of abounding wickedness, the Leadens: and from the scarcity of writers, the obscure age a.* And *Genebrard*, though according to the manner of the Beast, he chargeth it upon the *Lutherans*, that they only call it *seculum infelix*, an unhappy age, yet he

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(a) *Anno Christi nongentesimo, Indictione tertia, novum inchoatur seculum, quod sui asperitate ac boni sterilitate Ferreum, malique exundantis deformitate Plumbeum, atque inopia Scriptorum appellari consuevit Obscurum. ad An. 900.*

elsewhere forgets himself ( therein the more inexcusable, because he was one of them who ought to have good memories) and in his Chronology plainly tells us, *This is called the unhappy age, being barren of ingenious and learned men* (a): and he tells you, that the Popes of that age (the principal conservators of Tradition, and the subjects of Infallibility) *had altogether fallen from the virtue of their Ancestors, and were rather Apostates than Apostles* (b). Can any man doubt of the power of Papists to make a Transubstantiation, when we see with our eyes that they can turn every piece of wood into an infallible Doctor? I think I need say nothing for the confutation of Mr. Whites argument, but barely repeat it, that the Reader may compare it with the state of this age, It is this: The whole Church, or major part of it in every age were so knowing, that they infallibly understood all the doctrines of the foregoing age, and so careful and pious, that they would not deceive themselves, nor their posterity. Answer the Argument I need not, but only observe three things in this age, which will prove *ὑποκαταστάσις* not only the possibility but a great probability both of mistaking their Ancestors, and of deceiving themselves and their posterity. 1. Ignorance. 2. Carelessness and Profaneness. 3. Scarcity of writers. No man can adjudge infallibility to such an age, unless he will offer violence to all his rational powers.

§. 17. 1. There was a gross ignorance in the generality of the Clergy, the Popes themselves not excepted. *The whole world was overspread with darkness, as thick as that in Egypt, saith Baronius* (c). *It is reported, that at that*

*a Infelix dicitur hoc seculum, exhaustum hominibus ingenio & doctrina claris. In Chronol.*

*b Pontifices à majorem virtute defecerunt, Apostolici Apostaticæ potius quam Apostolici. ib.*

*c Orbis terræ totus tenebris fuit offusus, Peccatorum fuit caligo, Ægypti pene tenebras superans. in An. 974.*

time there were no publick Schools, saith *Carolus Sigonius* (a). And the *Synodus Rhemensis*, cited by *Baronius*, plainly say, that at that time, it was reported, that there were scarce any learned men at Rome (b). He that saith so ignorant an age could not mistake, must needs be in a dream, and when he awakes I shall give him further answer. If any prudent man ( who will not suffer his eyes like *Samsons* to be put out, that he may grind in the Pope's mill ) reflect upon the state of some ignorant Country congregation among us, if he please to examine them, he shall find them so far from understanding infallibly the doctrines delivered by their Ancestors and former Ministers 20 or 30 years before, that they do not understand the opinions of their own age, no nor so much as those which their Minister (though an able painful and plain Preacher, such as were very few in that age,) hath been preaching upon for divers years together. And yet ( forsooth ) a company of such men as these ( by Mr. *White's* argument ) are free from all possibilities of mistakes what were the doctrines delivered by the age before them.

§. 18. 2. There was an universal carelesness and profaneness upon mens spirit. Neither Minister nor people did much busie their heads about such matters, but minded only the advancement of *their secular interest*, and the pampering of their bellies, ( say their own Historians : ) the Clergy then were universally negligent in teaching and instructing the people, ( whose ignorance they saw most serviceable to their designs ) and the people were as careless to understand the concerns of religion. And if this very carelesness and profaneness did utterly

a Scholæ publicæ nullæ tunc fuisse produntur, De regno Italiæ c. 7.

b Cum hoc tempore Roma nullus pene sit (ut fama est) qui literas didicerit. *Baronius*. An. 992.

lose and extinguish all the sentiments and doctrines of true religion, delivered by *Adam* and *Noah*, in their posterity, why might it not be so after *Christ's* time? *Mr. White* and his Partisans venture their salvation upon the truth of this absurd Proposition: That it was impossible the same cause should produce the same effects. Nor is it to any purpose that *Rushworth* alledgeth to prove the disparity, viz. *That only one man and one woman were witnesses of those high wonders (whereas the Gospel had innumerable miracles witnessed to multitudes of people in diverse countries) that the hearers could hardly believe them, that they had but a sleight care of recommending God's service to their children, and that they were taken up with the worlds plantation, and other secular affairs: and there was no set form and institutions of Priests and governours to joyn all nations in communion, no chief Bishop, &c.* Dialo. 3. §. 15.

For 1. supposing (that which Divines generally believe) viz. that *Adam* truly repented of his sin; it is contrary to common sense to believe, that he who had such a fresh knowledge and lively sense of the difference between highest felicity and utmost misery, should be careless in the concerns of religion: that he that had been the happy instrument of ruining all his posterity, should not use all possible diligence to heal the wound himself had made; and with greatest instances and importunities endeavour the perpetuation of religion to his posterity.

2. It is false to say there were then no Priests, no chief Bishop to take care of religion: for though there were none that had the names, yet there were that had the office, and did the work, viz. the heads of families, and especially the great & common Father and Universal Bishop of all mankind. And it is both against reason, & experience, & charity, to think this natural Bishop would take less care of the conservation of religion among his own natural children than the Bishop of *Rome* would do among his titular relations.



lations. 3. As for the wonders of the Creation, they were so great and glorious and innumerable, and at that time so evident and unquestionable, that it is the greatest wonder of all how they could disbelieve them, or so soon wear out the memory of them; especially when *Adam* lived above 600 years to demonstrate the verity and inculcate the story of them, whereas the Apostles were dead, & all the eye-witnesses of their miracles in a fourth part of that time. In a word, though it be easie in this, and all other resemblances, to devise several dissimilitudes and disproportions, yet in the main there is an agreement, that the carelesness of posterity may blast the most powerful and important Traditions. If it be further pretended, that there is a disparity, because God hath promised his spirit to guide the Christians into truth, and to preserve them from mistake: I shall only say two things having fully answered this before. 1. Whatever promise or priviledge of the Spirit is made to Christians, surely it is a most absurd and unreasonable thing, to pretend the donation of this priviledge, and the performance of this promise unto such, as we have now described; concerning whom the Scripture expressly tells us, *that they are sensuall, not having the Spirit*, Jude v. 19. and *they cannot receive the Spirit of God*, Joh. 14. 17. Where the spirit of God is, it brings light with it, it turns men from darkness into a marvellous light, it rouseth men out of the sleep of carelesness, and makes them give all diligence to make their calling and election sure. And therefore where ignorance and profaneness are allowed and predominant, (as apparently they were in this age) we may safely say, such have not the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, *for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, especially that which is the principal part of it, a liberty from the bondage of sin and Satan, by whom that Age was so wofully captivated, that we need not many arguments to shew, that

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that they were not influenc'd by Gods Spirit, but acted by the rulers of the darkness of this world, the spirit that now worketh in the Children of disobedience. 2. This is impertinent to the present argument, which is drawn not from the efficacy of a divine promise, but from the nature of the thing, and the common prudence of men, and that natural principle of self-preservation (as you will plainly see, if you look back upon Mr. *Whites* words.) This argument proceeds as if it were morally impossible for men wilfully to deceive themselves and their posterity, which is not from the influence of a divine promise, but from an instinct of nature, and so this evasion is sufficient. To return therefore (having removed this rub out of the way) and to make good what I have said concerning the carelessness and wickedness of the age, that this disease had overspread the whole body Civil and Ecclesiastical, the Pope himself not excepted, you shall hear from the approved Authors of the Romish Church, *Platina* calls several of those Popes, *Monstra & portentum hominum*, monsters of men, *John 11th* is called by Cardinal *Baronius* (one who we may be sure, would do the Popes no wrong and the Protestants no right) *rather a defiler than ruler of the Roman seat* (a). They were prodigious Popes, saith *Genebrardus* (b). Pope *Sergius*, saith *Baronius*, was a slave of all vices, and the wickedst of men (c). And of *John* the 10th he saith, *Than whom none was more filthy* (d). And such characters they give to diverse of the Popes of that age: and these are supreme Heads of the Church, the prime subjects and fountains of Infallibility, and con-

(a) *Sedis Apostolicæ inquinatior potius, quam rector, ad an. 936.*

(b) *Pontifices isti prodigiosi erat, ad an. C. 913.*

(c) *Sergius erat vitiorum omnium servus, facinorosissimus omnium, ad an. 908.*

(d) *Quo turpior fuit nullus.*

formable to the head were the generality of the members of that politick body, the ministers and governours, (as well as the people) of that age, as you hear acknowledged by their own most approved Authors. Now compare this with their argument for Tradition, and you will be able to judge of the solidity of it. The two Pillars upon which the Infallibility of the argument from Tradition is built, are these, (I shall give you them in the words of *Rushworth* in his applauded Dialogues 3. §. 15.) 1. *It was no hard matter for the Church to conserve the truth of her doctrine, if she were careful; which histories plainly bear witness she was.* 2. *That nature forceth men to have care of Religion, and therefore it was impossible any error should creep into the Church.* And elsewhere saith he, *Nature permits not men to be sleepy in Religion,* §. 8. To which discourse I reply three things, which plainly evince the folly of this opinion. 1. That the Infallibility of Tradition by these Arguments depends upon the Faith of some few Historians, whom all confess to be fallible, which is a contradiction. 2. That the supposed carefulness (upon which the Infallibility of Tradition depends) being the effect of that nature which is equally in all men, if it make any person or Council infallible, it must make every particular Church, nay every Christian infallible, (at least such as have common knowledge and prudence in them.) 3. Observe the Impudence of this sort of men, that dare avouch those Histories for witnesses of the Churches care, which have so expressly and unanimously recorded her carelesness both in this and other ages. See *ch. 4.* §. 19. 3. There is another thing very considerable in this matter, *viz.* There was a great scarcity of writers, which cuts the sinews of that grand objection which they urge in all their Treatises; That there could be no change in doctrine without Schism and a notorious tumult (as *Whire* saith.) and they prove there was no change, because

we cannot shew the Authors, times, and place of them. (As if one that had got the plague, may say he is free from it, because he knows not how, nor where, nor from whom he got it.) Now here appears the unreasonableness of their demand, and the absurdity of their argument; how can it be expected that we should give an account of all the occurrences and mutations of that age; when they confess so few books were written, and those that were, were written by such as were either wholly, or in part leavened with the corruption of the time, and therefore (for their own honour) obliged to conceal all such changes and defections, as themselves had an hand in. And if any reputed Heretick durst venture to betray any of the secrets of the mystery of iniquity which was then working, his book was presently suppressed, and he and it both confuted by an argument fetched out of the Fire, or rather thrown into it. So the Papists do by us, as if a man should blow out all the Lights, and then blame me for not finding what I was making inquest after, or as if one should burn my principal evidence, and then charge me that I cannot make out my Title. And yet notwithstanding all the frauds and force of the Romish Sea, God hath not left his Truth without witness, nor us without notable Testimonies, even from among themselves, of the successive depravations and corruptions in Religion by them foisted into the Church: but that hath been fully proved by others, and therefore I shall say nothing of it. I shall add only this, that although I have instanced but in one age, yet indeed there were several other ages overspread with the same deluge of ignorance, and carelessness, and looseness, and consequently lyable to the same mistakes: such as the age before the reformation of Religion was, and diverse others, wherein learned men were thought to be Conjurers, and reading of Greek was counted as hard as the quadrating of a Circle, and skill

skill in the learned languages made a man half an Heretic: and this all Records are full of. I think I need say no more to prove the first branch, *viz.* That it was possible for some Ages, or the major part of them to mistake the mind of their Predecessors in matters of Religion. But I must not omit Mr. *Whites* animadversion upon this consideration which he calls a *ridiculous cavil, and a slander so palpably absurd, that he can scarce perswade himself to think they that use it are not rather blinded with malice than ignorance.* You will easily judge his reason runs low, because his passion flies so high: and what is the reason of this clamour? why (saith he) *The Protestants acknowledge the doctrines of the Roman Church (which they call errors) were already flourished some hundreds of years before these times of ignorance.* Apolog. for Tradition, Encounter 1. Shall I return Mr. *White* his own language? What shall I ascribe this intolerable mistake to? Shall I attribute it to his ignorance? I cannot tell how to do so to one of his parts and reading. Dare he say that all the present doctrines of the Church of *Rome* were flourishing some hundreds of years before the tenth age, whose ignorance I have represented and proved? Or if he say and think so, yet dare he say the Protestants are of this mind, if he ever looked into any Protestant Author? Is it not evident to the whole world, that the Protestants do both universally deny, and solidly disprove this audacious assertion, and evidently prove (even by the suffrages of learned Papists) the far later novelty of many of their errors? Shall I then ascribe it to his malice? I am loth to do so: although none more frequently guilty of that crime, than they that most boldly charge it upon others. One may by this and such like passages imagine, how vain a thing it is, to expect sincerity and honesty from these men in the handling of controversies, when such a one as Mr. *White*, (a person of more repute for candour and ingenuity than

most of their writers ) shall not fear to assert in Print in the face of all the Protestant world, *That the Protestants do boldly acknowledge the Roman Church hath had universal Tradition for the whole body of its faith, ever since S. Gregories days, which is now a thousand years !* than which nothing can be said more notoriously false, and monstrously absurd. But again, suppose the age most famous for its ignorance were after S. Gregories days, who knows not ( that is not a meer stranger to all Antiquity and Ecclesiastical History ) that there was in some ages before S. Gregory, at least among the generality of Christians and many Ministers, so much ignorance, as might easily betray them to mistakes in several doctrines, and pretended Traditions ? And finally, if all he aims at were granted, it signifies not much, and cannot pretend to prove any more than this, That in the first ages errors did not creep in at the door ; which may be granted without any considerable prejudice to the Protestant assertion, since in other ages most of their great errors might come in that way, and in all ages they might come in several other ways.

§. 23. The second Branch is this, That as some ages might mistake the doctrines of their Fathers, so they might knowingly deliver to their posterity, not the doctrine they received from their Ancestors, but some other; and of this many reasons may be given, but I shall confine my self to three.

§. 21. 1. It might be from Gods just judgement, giving men up to believe what was false, viz. That such doctrines did come from the Apostles by their Ancestors, which indeed did not. Nay, what these men would needs perswade us was impossible, the Holy Ghost hath assured us is certain and sure, 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12. *Because they received not the truth in the love of it, God shall send strong delusions, that they should believe a lye :* a place more considerable, because it is particularly levelled at the Romish faction

faction (as might be evidently shewed, if it were not extravagant from my present business.) That the character here described suits with the quality of diverse ages forementioned, *viz.* that they were such, as did not receive the truth in the love of it, that they had pleasure in unrighteousness, he that reviews what hath been here said, will find no cause to doubt: and therefore that the judgement here denounced should be inflicted upon them, is no more than what might be expected from the faithfulness of God, and the usual course of his providence. And if they might believe other lies of greater importance, and most dangerous consequence, why might they not believe such a lye as this, *viz.* That a Doctrine came from the Apostles, which indeed did not? And because the generality of the forementioned ages, the Clergy and Popes not excepted, were apparently guilty of the sins here deciphered, and consequently obnoxious to the judgement here predicted, therefore it is intolerable impudence to assert, that those men were infallibly guided into all truth, whom that God, who cannot lye, hath threatned to give up to believe lies, of which this is not the least considerable and dreadful, to believe such persons to be infallible.

§. 22. 2. The greatest part of the Church in one age might knowingly recede from the doctrine of their immediate Ancestors, and deliver another doctrine to their posterity; because they might believe that the Churches and Fathers of the next foregoing age might fall into some errors: for that which is actually believed by Protestants now, might possibly be believed by the Fathers then: *Ab esse ad posse valet argumentum.* And this is sufficient for the answer of this argument, and the defence of our cause: but *ex abundantia* I adde, that *de facto*, this was the faith of the greatest part of the Church and writers in some ages, as I have already shewed out

of undeniable testimonies. To which I shall only adde 2 or 3. passages out of *Cyprian*, by which the Reader may evidently discern, how little weight was then laid upon (that which is now said to be infallible) Tradition, and the testimony of the present Church. Tradition indeed was the plea urged by the Bishop of *Rome* against *Cyprian* and the *African Bishops*: now mark what the reply is. Two things *Cyprian* answers: 1. *That they of Rome did not observe all ancient Traditions, and this (saith he) appears from their opinion about Easter*: which, by the way, discovers the vanity of that supposition, which they lay as a basis of the present position, viz. That the Church of *Rome* delivers nothing, but what she professeth to have received from her Ancestors. 2. He answers, *That this was but a humane Tradition, and therefore not infallible (a).* And it is considerable, that he writes thus to the Pope, by which we may sufficiently understand what was *Cyprians* judgement, and the faith of that age concerning the infallibility of Tradition, as also of the Pope; and Church of *Rome*. And conformable to *Cyprians* was the decision of the whole Council of *Carthage*, *When truth is manifest, (say they) let custom yield to truth, and although hitherto none did baptize Hereticks in the Church, now let them begin to baptize them (b.)* And in another place *Cyprian* speaking of the custom of mixing wine and water in the Sacrament hath these words: *Nor should any one think that the custome of some is to be followed, for we are to enquire whom they followed, for only Christ is to be followed: and he adds, that we are not to regard what others have done before us, but what Christ, who is before all, first did; for we*

<sup>a</sup> *Epist. 74. ad Pompeium fratrem.*

<sup>b</sup> *Veritate manifestata cedat consuetudo veritati, ut etsi in præteritum quis in Ecclesia hereticos non baptizabat, nunc baptizare incipiat. Opera Cypriani per Pamelium p. 402.*



must not follow mens customes, but Gods Truth (a). And in another place he positively asserts, that when any thing is out of order, the only way to be satisfied is to go to the fountain, i.e. the head and original of Divine Tradition, to Evangelical and Apostolical Tradition (b) From all which it undeniably follows, that Cyprian and his brethren did not judge the Tradition of the next preceding Age infallible, nor the Testimony of the present Church sufficient (as these Gentlemen now do) and consequently thought it might introduce opinions contrary to what they received from their Ancestors, when by these allegations it appears as plainly, as if it were written with a Sun-beam, they judged it liable to mistakes and errors; and this is the very Doctrine of the Protestants.

§. 23. 3. There might be an agreement and design amongst many persons and eminent members of the Church, to corrupt the Doctrine received from their Ancestors for their worldly interest and carnal ends, of which almost all ages afford us woful and innumerable instances. With the Readers leave I will exemplifie this Proposition in a notorious instance, in a Doctrine of great concernment, (which is the *prora & puppis*, the foundation stone and corner stone of the Romish Religion, and if you will take *Bellarmines* word, necessary to Salvation) I mean the Pope's Supremacy. I beg the Readers pardon, if I do a little more largely insist upon it, than my manner is, because the Story is remarkable, and strikes at the root of this novel conceit, concerning the impossibility of a willful deception. Mr. *White* tells us, the Church cannot be deceived in Tradition, and especially the Church and

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<sup>a</sup> Non est quod existimet aliquis sequendam esse quorundam consuetudinem, querendum est enim quem ipsi sunt secuti. — Nam non nisi Christus sequendus est. — Non debemus attendere quid alijs ante nos faciendum putaverit, &c. Epist. 63.

<sup>b</sup> Ep. 74.

Bishop of *Rome* ( who by the consent of all the Papists have been the most faithful conservators of Tradition. ) The Papists generally agree, that they have an Authentick and universal Tradition on the behalf of the Popes Supremacy, of which the right of appeals is a principal branch and the greatest evidence. And this Tradition (say they ) came to them from the Apostles, by the Fathers of all ages successively. Well then, to come to the story. In the year 417. there was a famous Council at *Carthage*, ( owned by *Bellarmino* and *Baronius* by the name of *The general Council at Carthage* ) consisting of 217 Bishops, among whom was *Alypius* and *St. Austin*. *Zosimus* being Pope at that time sends his Legates thither, and pretends a right of appeals from the *African Churches* to himself at *Rome*; and to make this good he alledgeth for it some of the Canons of the Council of *Nice*, for he ascends no higher, the more silly wretch he ! For if the Doctrine of the present Church of *Rome* be true, he might have brought that, which was more evident and irresistible than 100 Canons of *Nice*, ( which now all the world rings of, and all their discourses are full fraught with ) viz. The institution of Christ, the supremacy of *Peter* devolved upon him, the universal Tradition of the whole Church. But of all these here is *altum silentium*, for you must conceive, these were arguments laid up in store ( like the treasure in *St. Marks Chest* ) for some high future exigences, or wisely reserved for a season, wherein the World should wonder after the Beast, and be most capable of such impressions. Well, the Fathers consider his Petition, ( for as yet the Popes were not masters of their Art, and had not learned their Lesson of *Volumus, Statuimus, Mandamus*, ) & marvel at the proposition, and tell *Faustus* and his Collegues, that they find no such Canons in their Copies of the Council of *Nice* as were alledged, and had indeed been forged at *Rome* ( as is acknowledged

known even by the Popish Council of (a) *Florence*. Hereupon a motion is made and agreed, that they send forthwith to the Bishops of *Constantinople*, *Alexandria*, and *Antioch*, for their Copies of the Acts of that Council. (A sawcy trick it was not only to deny the Popes Infallibility, but also to question his Verity) When they receive them, they find that the pretended Canons were not there, and so conclude, there should be no appeals from *Africa* to the Roman Bishop. A strange boldness in this Council to reverse the institution of Christ, and usurp upon St. *Peters* Jurisdiction, and provoke him upon whom they wholly depended for the Confirmation of all their Decrees! it is great pity they were not better advised. Well, you may imagine what sad tidings this was at *Rome*. You will desire to know what their Answer is; why then for your satisfaction, I pray you take notice: They have a Tradition at *Rome* (it is part of that inscription upon *Seth's* Pillars, erected before the flood, which *Josephus* mentions, the Counterpart whereof they have in the *Vatican*) that when ever his Holiness is gravel'd with an hard Argument, and can do no good about the premises, it may be lawful for him, or others pleading for him, to deny the Conclusion. *Bellarmino's* words are express: *The African Fathers were deceived through ignorance* (b). What pity was it that *Bellarmino* was not their Secretary to inform them better. *The African Fathers did rashly, and departed from the example and obedience of their Ancestors*, saith *Stapleton* (c). q. d. they

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a Nonne vides reverende Pater summum Pontificem Zosimum falsum decretum & non in Synodo promulgatum ad tantum Concilium pro re tam magna misisse?

b *Africani Patres ignorantia decepti erant. de Pontif. lib. 2. cap. 25. §. Respondemus. c Patres Africani temerè fecerunt & à majorum suorum obedientia & exemplis hac in re recesserunt, in Princip. fid. con. 3. q. 7. in solut. arg. 2.*

were naughty boys and deserved to be whipped into better manners; The more inexcusable the Pope that did not thunder them into order by his Excommunications. But why do I mention these? Behold a greater than *Bellarmino* or *Stapleton* is here; Enter *Boniface* the second, who thus writes in his Epistle to *Eulabius* (an Epistle owned for his by *Pighius*, *Lindanus*, *Sanderus*, *Turrianus*, *Alamus Copus*, and *Harding*, though *Bellarmino* being urged with it, pretends it is suspected, but dare not say it is forged.) *Anrelius* with his Collegues (whereof *S. Austin* was one) by the instigation of the Devil, began proudly to exalt themselves against the Church of Rome (a). So it seems these Fathers were wickedly resolved against the Supremacy of the Pope, with a *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo*, and they whom so many of the Learned Papists affirm to be infallibly guided by the Spirit of God, his Holiness declares they were acted by the Devil. By this time I hope the Reader, that is not wholly blind may see the vanity of this Argument from Tradition. Catholick Tradition is pretended at Rome for the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility: This Tradition with others comes to them by uninterrupted succession from the Apostle, wherein (by the Argument I have now in consideration) it was impossible for the Bishops or Governours of the Church, either to misunderstand the mind of their Ancestors, or wittingly to deceive their posterity. That which they make impossible to be done the instance proposed discovers to be certainly done, it being impossible that the Fathers should make such a decree, if they had not either been ignorant of such a Tradition (as *Bellarmino* chargeth them) or wilfully and ma-

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a *Anrelius cum Collegis, instigante Diabolo, superbire contra ecclesiam Romanam cepit.*

litiously opposed it (as the Pope accuseth them.) And forasmuch as these Fathers pleaded a Tradition directly contrary to that which the Romanists pretend, viz. that there should be no appeals to *Rome*, it irresistibly follows that Tradition hath deceived either them formerly, or the Papists at this day. I shall dismiss this Answer with a remark upon the whole matter, that if the Pope and popish faction durst for their own base and ambitious designs, use such palpable forgery in a time of so much light, when they had so many diligent observers and potent opposers, I leave to the prudent Reader to imagine, what forgeries might be expected from them in after ages, in times of ignorance and carelessness, when all the world was in a deep sleep, and the Pope only vigilant to improve all occasions to his advantage, and had almost all Princes and people in the Christian World at his Devotion. And thus much may serve for the seventh Answer, wherein I have been the more prolix, because it strikes at the root of the Argument, and not only proves the possibility of deceit in Traditions, but also discovers the ways and modes by which mistakes may be committed, and falsehoods introduced under pretence of Tradition.

I will add but one thing more.

§. 24. *Ans.* 8. And last, if the Tradition pretended give us infallible assurance that the Doctrines of the present Church of *Rome* are come from the Apostles, then the Romish Church holdeth no Doctrines, but such as they have received from the Apostles: But the Romish Church holdeth many doctrines which she hath not received from the Apostles. This I might take for granted, having already proved it in that fundamental Tradition of the Church of *Rome* concerning the Popes Supremacy: I might refer the Reader to what I have reported out of diverse Popish Authors of greatest note,

concerning their acknowledgments of their departing from the Doctrines and practises of the Fathers: and having said so much there, I shall content my self with mentioning two particulars. The first shall be (that which hath been more largely discussed *Chap. 3.* whither I refer the Reader) about the blessed *Virgins* conception in original sin. The present Doctrine of the Romish Church (or at least of the far greatest part and most eminent members of it) is for her immaculate Conception, as I shewed before from the Decrees of Popes and Universities, &c. and innumerable of their most approved Authors. How much this opinion was favoured by the Council of *Trent*, sufficiently appears from their Decree about Original sin; (though cunningly and doubtfully delivered, as the Devils Oracles used to be) in which Decree they declare, that they would not comprehend the Blessed *Virgin*: The sense of which Decree (according to that favourable glosse which Mr. *White* puts upon it) was this, That the Council did judge both opinions probable. Now from the business thus stated I gather two undeniable Arguments to prove the Fallibility of Tradition. 1. Tradition told the Ancient Fathers that one of those opinions was positively false, *viz.* That the Blessed *Virgin* was not conceived in sin: Tradition told the Council of *Trent* that either of these opinions was probably true, which is an implicate contradiction. 2. Seeing in this hot contest not yet ended between the different Factions of the Romanists in this point, both sides pretend Tradition for their contrary opinions (and both agree in this to hold nothing but what they have by Tradition,) Therefore Tradition must needs have deceived one of them, *Ergo* it is not Infallible. To which I shall add, that the Doctrine which the most and learnedst of them hold, *viz.* of immaculate conception, was not received by Tradition from the Fathers, as I have shewed

ed from the ingenuous confession of their most Learned Writers, to which I add those words of *Melchior Canus*, That the Blessed Virgin was wholly free from Original sin cannot be proved out of Scripture, according to its genuine meaning. But this is but a small matter to give the Scripture a go-by, let us see what he saith of the Golden Rule of Tradition, therefore he adds presently, Nor can it be said that it came into the Church by Apostolical Tradition, for those Traditions could not come to our hands by any other than those Bishops, and holy Authors which succeeded the Apostles: But it is evident that those antient Writers did not receive it from their Ancestors, for then they would have faithfully delivered it to their posterity (a). And yet if Mr. Whites Discourse be solid, in spite of your eyes you shall believe, not onely that no Doctrine is delivered by the Church of Rome which hath not been conveyed to their hands from Fathers to Children, even from the Apostles dayes, but that it was impossible any other Doctrine should creep in.

The other instance is that of the Canon of the Scripture imposed upon us by the Church of Rome, which they say is another Apostolical Tradition, and yet their own prime Authors confess the most antient Fathers to be on our side, at least as to several of their Apocryphal Books: *Sixtus Senensis* gives them to us in general: The Antient Fathers did hold the controverted Books to be

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a *Beatam virginem à peccato originali fuisse penitus liberam è Libris sacris juxta germanum literæ sensum nusquam habetur — Nec vero dici potest per Traditionem Apostolorum, id in Ecclesiam descendisse. Cum hujusmodi Traditiones non per alios quam Episcopos illos antiquos & sanctos Autores Apostolis succedentes ad nos usque pervenerint. At constat præcos illos Scriptores non id à majoribus accepisse. Traderent enim bonâ fide & ipsi posteris suis, loc. com. l. 7. cap. 3. conclus. 4.*

*un-canonically* (a). Bellarmine gives us *Epiphanius*, *Hilary*, *Ruffinus*, and *Hierom*; (b) *Canus* gives us *Origen*, *Damasceen*, *Athanasius*, and *Melito* (c) a famous and antient Father, who flourished *Anno* 170. and was a man of great judgment and venerable Sanctity, saith *Sixtus Senensis*, who purposely travelled to the Eastern Churches (where the Apostles had their principal residence and employment) to learn out the true Canon, and bring a *non est inventus* for the Apocryphal Books, and returns, with the very same Canon which we own, so that in him we have the Testimonies of all those flourishing and Apostolical Churches, to which *Tertullian* directs us for the discovery of the Truth. Nor to this day have the Papiests cited one Father or Council, within the compass of 600. (I think I may say a 1000) years, who did receive their whole Canon, and consequently none of them (for ought appears in their Writings) knew any thing of this pretended Tradition, but (as it seems by the story) when the Image of *Diana* dropt down from Heaven, she brought this Tradition along with her. The like might be shewed in sundry other particulars: In the celibacy of Priests, which is only *de jure humano*, not *divino*, by the confession of *Thomas*, *Durandus*, *Lombardus*, and *Scotus*, four principal pillars of the Papal Church, and *Turrianus* was noted by *Cassander* as the only man of all, both old and late writers of the Popish party, who maintained the *jus divinum* of it: But if it were an Apostolical Tradition, it was *de jure Divino*, and the Council of *Nice* would never have dispensed with a Divine Injunction. So in the Worshipping of Images, Transubstantiation,

a *Prisci patres Libros controversos pro Non-Canonicis habuerunt. Biblioth. sanct. lib. 1. Sect. 1.*

b *De verbo Dei lib. 1. c. 20.* c *Loc. Theol. lib. 2. c. 10.*



Purgatory, and many other considerable points, where-  
in I need say nothing, because it hath been so fully cleared  
by diverse Learned Protestant Writers, particularly, by *Jewel*, *Usher* in his Answer to the Jesuites  
Challenge; *Moulins* Novelty of Popery, *Dallaus* in  
several pieces, *Rainolds* de Libris Apocryphis, *Whita-  
ker*, *Chamier*, and innumerable others: But *manum de  
Tabulâ*.

This I hope may suffice for the refutation of this novel  
invention, concerning the Infallibility of Tradition, and  
the Testimony of the present Church, where I have been  
more large, because it is a late plea, and less hath been  
said of it by Protestant Authors. And so it remains un-  
shaken, that a Papists Faith hath no solid Foundation in  
orall Tradition, and the present Churches Authority,  
which was the business of this Proposition.

## C H A P. VI.

### *Of Miracles, and the motives of credibility.*

*Señ. 1.* **B**Ut we are not yet come to the end of our  
journey. And although the Arguments urged  
by Protestants against their resolution of Faith, have  
probably convinced the consciences of diverse of them,  
yet have they not stop'd their mouths. We have shewed  
in the former Chapters, how they have been driven  
from post to post, and as in a besieged City, when the  
Walls and works of it are battered down, they raise  
new fortifications, so having seen their former pretences  
batter'd about their ears, some of them have devi-  
sed one shift more; for finding themselves yet in that  
ridiculous Circle ( of believing the Scripture for the  
Churches sake, and the Church for Scriptures sake) not-  
withstanding

withstanding all the attempts of their Brethren to get out ; Some of them have taken up their rest in the marks of a Church, and the motives of credibility.

This (though rejected by former and learned Papists yet) of late hath been taken up by Turnebull in his *Tetragonismus*, a Discourse about the Object of Faith, and after him by the late Answerer of Bishop Lauds Book, called *Lauds Labyrinth*, whose words are these : *We prove the Churches Infallibility not by Scripture, but by the motives of Credibility, and signes of the Church, which are these, sanctity of life, miracles, efficacy, purity, and excellency of Doctrine, fulfilling of Prophecies, succession of lawfully sent Pastours, Unity, Antiquity, and the very name of Catholick. Then (saith he) having thus proved the Churches Infallible Authority, and by that received the Scripture, we confirm the same by Scripture, which Scripture proofs are not Prime and Absolute, but only secondary and ex suppositione, & ad hominem, or ex principiis concessis against Sectaries (a).* This is their plea, concerning which I shall need to say the lesse, because the Book wherein it is revived and urged, called, *Labyrinthus Cantuariensis*, is so solidly and Learnedly Answered by my worthy friend Mr. *Stillingfleet* : Yet having finished this Discourse long before that excellent work came forth, and having twisted it into the method of the present Treatise and design, I thought not fit wholly to supersede it, whereby the body of the work would be rendered lame and incompleat, but rather to be shorter in it, and as far as I can, to cut off such passages as happily may be coincident with what is said by Mr. *Stillingfleet* in that particular ; for I do not desire *actum agere*.

§. 2. *Answ.* 1. Let it be observed, how shamelessly these men abuse their Readers, when they pretend the Infallibility of the Church is solidly demonstrated from Scripture; (and this they generally do :) Here you have *rem confitentem*, they confess the imbecillity of those Arguments; For (say they) they are but secondary proofs, and *Argumenta ad hominem*: Now such Arguments are not cogent and concluding in themselves, but only do conclude against some particular Adversary from his own principles: So they acknowledge that although their Arguments may perswade one that is docible, yet they cannot convince a gainsayer: And the strength of their Argument depends upon the Courtesy of the Protestants.

§. 3. 2. In vain are these Marks of a Church pleaded for the infallibility of the Church of *Rome*, when other Churches have a juster claim to them, and so little colour have the Romanists for their monopoly of them; that upon enquiry it will be found they have no considerable interest in them: This I shall shew in the principal and most important of them. 1. The first in dignity (though not in order) is the glory of Miracles: The most eminent in this kind are confessed to be those which were done by Christ and his Apostles. Those Miracles were done in Confirmation of the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches, not of the Church of *Rome*, which appears thus: These Miracles were done in confirmation of the Doctrine delivered in the Scriptures, but the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches is the Doctrine delivered in the Scriptures, and the Doctrine of the present Church of *Rome* is repugnant thereunto: *Ergo*, These Miracles were done in confirmation of the Doctrine of the Reformed Churches. The *Major* our adversaries dare not deny: The *Minor* hath been undeniably evidenced so much to the Conviction of our Adversaries

versaries, that they dare not own the Scripture for their Judge, and instead of submitting themselves to its sentence, bend their wits to except against the judge, and decline its Tribunal, following that Counsel which was given to *Pericles*, when he was studying how to give up his accounts to the *Athenians*, that he should rather study how to give up no account at all. And some of them (whose words are recited in this Treatise) acknowledge the folly of their brethren, who would manage their cause by Scripture Arguments. But whether the Protestant Doctrine hath been solidly evinced from Scripture or not, thus much undoubtedly follows, that if any miracles be pretended against the Doctrine which Christ sealed by his miracles, they are not to be regarded, and the miracles done by Christ &c. are infinitely to be preferred before them; and consequently the glory of Miracles is more ours than theirs.

§. 4. The like I may say secondly, for the efficacy of Doctrine, which they so confidently appropriate to themselves: But if the Efficacy of their sword were not greater than that of their Doctrine, the world would quickly see the vanity of that Argument: And how little confidence themselves put in it may be seen by the professed necessity of an Inquisition. Next news I expect is to hear this Argument pleaded on the behalf of the Alcoran, I am sure it may upon as good grounds, their religion being much of the same complexion, and the Popish cause being managed most commonly by *Mahumetan* weapons. But on the contrary let a man consider with himself, the miraculous success of the Protestant Religion in the late Reformation, how strangely, speedily, generally, it diffused it self, in the very same manner as the Gospel did in its first Plantation in the world, notwithstanding the great disadvantages it was to grapple with; the horrible ignorance & perverseness of the Age,  
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the mighty power of long custom and inveterate prejudice, the craft of Politicians, the learning of the whole World, the might of Princes and Emperours, the threats, fires, inquisitions of Persecutors, the great offers, and multiplied allurements to Apostasie; I say, he that shall review all these things (as they are recorded by the Historians of both parties) will understand to whom this Character belongs.

§. 5. For the purity and excellency of their Doctrine: If their and our Doctrines were to be tried by that test, the controversie would speedily be at an end. The Word of God is the palace and rule of purity, and that Doctrine which hath most of conformity therewith, hath most of purity. Howsoever, it is too gross a begging of the question, to alledge that for a note and evidence of their Church, which is more doubtful than the Church it self: And for the Sanctity of their lives, we are heartily glad to hear of it; if the reports were as credible as the news is good, it would rejoyce our hearts, because their own Authors in several Ages, have successively acknowledged and bewailed, the horrible and universal wickedness of their own Church, Clergy, Popes, &c. All stories are full of their monstrous filthiness, though ordinarily masked under the Pretence of external holiness. And for the Holiness of their Church of late times, I shall only say this: Of all men they have least cause to dispute against *faith alone*, for he that can believe their sanctity, had need be a Solifidian, and have neither sense nor reason: but you must know the Church of *Rome* lives upon her old stock, it is the holiness of their Ancestors which they intend. *Bellarmino* is forced to go far back for his proofs, for he alledgeth the Sanctity of the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Antient Fathers as arguments of their Holiness; so the Church of *Rome* is all on a sudden grown Orthodox in the doctrine of imputation

imputation, with this proviso, that they allow the imputation of the Righteousness of their Ancestors to the present Church, but not of their wickedness, you may as far as you please even to *Adam*, nay, if you will, even to the Father of the *Præadamites*, impute to them the Holiness of their Ancestors, but for the prodigious filthiness, the Sorceries, Adulteries, Murders, Heresies of their Fathers and former Bishops, and Popes, that ought not to be imputed to them.

§. 6. And for the other grand Character of consent with Antiquity, which they vaunt so much of, among those, that either have not learning to search into the Antients, or wit to judge of what they read, so say nothing of this, that the hoary head of Antiquity is not to be respected, if it be not found in the way of righteousness; evil doctrines or habits, the more Antient, the worse, and the inveterateness of a disease, is no commendation to it. He that shall please to look into the Fathers with his own eyes, or peruse the Discourses of our learned Authors upon this point, such as *Rainolds*, *Jewel*, *Whitaker*, *Chamier*, *Dallaus*, *Albertinus*, *Usher*, *Morton*, *Morney*, *Rivet*, and multitudes more, will soon discover the impudence of this plea; and the fruit of their labours would quickly appear in the World, but for that piece of their imposture, that as they deny the reading of the Scripture to lay-men, so they forbid the reading of our Protestant Authors to their Scholars; excepting such whose consciences they find to be of a Jesuiticall complexion, and free from the heresy of tenderness.

§. 7. I know it will be said, that we want diverse of those marks which they have, as Duration, Amplitude, Visible succession, union among our selves and with the Pope: But although the Papiists have no colourable pretence to those Characters, among such as will inquire into the verity of their Assertions, and not greedily  
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swallow down all of them ; though in point of duration, divers of the most material Doctrines of the present Romish Church are so far from it , that they stand convicted of Novelisme by the confession of their own Authors. And for Amplitude, notwithstanding all their intolerable boasting with the credulous vulgar, the learned know, the Church of *Rome* containeth not one third part of the Christian World. And for Succession, their own Authors have acknowledged frequent and long interruptions, yea even in the Papal See. Yet if all that might be said upon those points were superseded, if they grant us, or we can prove the former, viz. that the miracles confirm our Doctrine, the Fathers profess our Faith, that the efficacy, purity, and excellency of Doctrine belong to us, we do not much matter the rest, nor will the Reader, who is satisfied in the former, be at all startled at the latter.

§. 8. 3. Consider what rotten pillars most of these are, upon which the Church of *Rome* leans, and you will find they need no *Sampson* to pull them down ; one of them excepted, which *Bellarmino* therefore puts in the first place, and that is from the name of *Catholick*, as being grounded upon that infallible Maxime, *Conveniunt rebus nomina sepe suis*: That therefore cannot be resisted, only I blame *Bellarmino's* oversight, that being so hard put to it to prove the Sanctity of his Church, he did not prove it from the Title of *Holiness* given to the head of it : and then here had been a pair of Demonstrations not to be parallel'd in all *Euclid*.

§. 9. And for several other marks, there is this inexcusable error in them, that they alledge those notes to prove the Church, which are altogether impertinent and ridiculous, if you do not presuppose the Church : so they wisely suppose, what they see they cannot prove : I instance in duration, Antiquity, Unity, Amplitude, Successi-

Succession, against which I thus argue: Either these do prove the being of the Church where ever they are, and the want of a Church where they are absent, or they do not; if they do not, then they are absurdly brought to prove their Church: if you say they do, then where those Characters are found, there is a true Church, and where they are wanting, there is no Church. But neither one, nor the other is true; not the first, for there is not one of those now mentioned but have agreed to Pagans or Hereticks. Who knows not the Antiquity, Duration, Amplitude, and Unity of the Pagan Religion? All those were the Arguments of the Heathens against the Christians, & the Papists have these arrows out of their Quiver: and to say truth, it is but reasonable, that they that have borrowed so much of their Religion and Worship from the Pagans, should also borrow their Arguments: for you know the accessary follows the Principal, the only wonder is, how those Arguments which were weak and absurd in the Pagans (and so judged and rejected by the Antient Fathers) are become strong in the Papists? But I know a reason for that too. The Pope pretends to a Divinity upon Earth, and consequently he can make weak things strong, and as the Authority of the Romish Church is Infallible, so their Arguments are without all doubt irresistible. Who knows not that the *Arrian* Heresy overspread the World? That the mystery of iniquity which began to work in *S. Paul's* days, was not to be finished and destroyed until Christs second coming? *2 Thes. 2.* That there was a time when the whole world wonder'd after the Beast.

And for the latter branch, who knows not that the Christian Church was a true Church, when it wanted those Characters, or at least diverse of them, when it was in its Infancy, and therefore could not have Duration, when confined to a narrow room, *Act. 1.* and therefore had



had no Amplitude? and consequently, these are no necessary marks, nor certain discoveries of the true Church as the Popish Doctors make their simple Protestants believe. So succession of Pastors signifies nothing, unless you presuppose the truth of the Church, whereof they are Pastors, which forceth their own Author to confess, *that without true doctrine, there is no true succession*, and that *a local succession alone without a profession of sound doctrine is no certain note*: so Stapleton (a). And Bellarmine ingenuously acknowledgeth, *that this argument of Succession is brought by them chiefly to prove, that there is no Church, where there is no succession, from whence it doth not follow* (saith he) *necessarily, that the Church is there, where succession is* (b). So if this argument should possibly disprove our Church, yet it doth not prove theirs.

§. 10. So for Unity, it is a Shoe will fit every foot, and hath been urged by Pagans, (whose great argument against Christianity, was taken from the divisions of Christians, and the unity of Pagans in their Religion,) and the Fathers answered the Pagans, (as we do the Papists) that as the Church of God is one, so the Devil's Babylon is one, as St. *Austin* expresseth it, and that Unity without Verity is not to be regarded. It was no argument of the verity and infallibility of the Jewish Church, that they were United against Christ; nor was it an evidence that the Church of *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and others mentioned in the New Testament were not the true Churches of

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a *Etsi absque vera doctrina non sit vera successio.* — Et post: *Sola loci occupatio non est certa nota, ut carnalēs Judæi de suo templo supponebant, sed sanæ quoque doctrinæ pariter cum loco professio.* Relat. con. 1. qu. 4. art. 2.

b *Hoc argumentum probat non esse Ecclesiam, ubi non est successio; ex quo tamen non colligitur necessariò ibi esse ecclesiam, ubi est successio.* lib. 4. de notis Ecclesiæ c. 8. Sect. Dico secundò.

Christ, because they were pester'd with fearful divisions, and worse opinions, than those which are owned by any Divines of the Protestant confession. But if this test were allowed, if things be weigh'd, they would have little benefit by it. I know there is nothing more familiar with the Romanists, than to possess silly seduced creatures with an opinion of their unity, and our divisions: I wish the latter were not more evident than the former; God open the eyes, and humble and forgive those, who by causing divisions and offences among us, have laid this stumbling-block in their way! it is no wonder, they that cannot examine things, are deceived with words. But if any discreet person look within the veil, and compare their condition and ours, he will find *Clodius accusat marchos*; and that they do, as if a man infected with a leprosie should reproach one who was troubled with the itch; or as if a man, whose hand was cut off, should quarrel with another for having a scratch on his finger. As for our Churches, I know it is usual for the Papists to charge us with the frantick opinions of Quakers, the desperate heresies of *Socinus*, and the like; but they would take it ill, if we should charge their Religion with all the Blasphemous, atheistical, heretical opinions of some that have lived amongst them. Their own consciences tell them, that these, though they are among us, yet they are not of us. He that would judge righteous judgement, must take his estimate from the publick confessions of the protestant Churches, (whose Harmony is published and proved to all the world,) and such of our learned Doctors as adhere to it, and there he shall find the diversities of opinion amongst us are only in some lesser points, haply about Government, or other circumstantial things; but it is most certain, and undeniable, that all of them do hold the head, & agree in all the fundamental points of Religion. But on the other side, what if there be cloven tongues

in Protestant Churches? Is *Rome* a City at unity within it self? How come we then to hear the noise of axes and hammers among the builders of their Temple? 300 differences have been collected out of *Bellarmines* words and works, and several of them of greater importance than any of our divisions (a) It is true they have a pretty knack, when we tell them of their divisions; they say they are not in things *de fide*: I see, *Duo cum faciunt idem non sunt idem*. It is a woful division among us between Remonstrants and Contra-remonstrants: but the same difference among them between Jesuits and Dominicans, that is of no moment. Oh ye foolish Papiests! how long will you love simplicity? So for that great division among them, about the very foundation of their Faith, (which is ten times more weighty than all the Protestant Differences put together,) the Popes infalibility; they tell you, it is not *de fide*, although indeed it be their *fundamentum fundamentorum* and their whole Religion hangs upon it, at least in the judgement of all the Jesuits, and the far greatest number of the learned Doctors and eminent writers of the Church of *Rome* of this age. It is confessed by themselves, that they are divided in this great point: so *Bellarmino* tells you, *The second opinion is, that the Pope as Pope may teach heresy*; this opinion (saith he) is defended by *Nilus*, some *Parisians*, as *Gerson*, and *Almaine*, and *Alphonfus de Castro*, and *Adrian the sixth a Pope*, in his question of Confirmation. So we have the infallibility of the Pope to assure us, that the Pope hath not infallibility. And this opinion (saith he) is not properly heretical, for we see the Church doth still tolerate it, yet it is erroneous, and

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a See Pappus his Contradictiones Doctorum Romanæ Ecclesiæ, and Bishop Halls Peace of Rome.

very near heresie (2). I will tell you how near it is, when the Jesuits have thoroughly leaven'd the world with that opinion; and perfectly destroyed the liberties of the Gallican Churches, and the Pope can do it without raising a commotion in his own Kingdom, then you shall find this *Embryo* perfected, and it is become a compleat Heresie. In like manner saith Dr. Holden, speaking of the Pope's infallibility: *We see it argued on both sides, by many most godly and learned Catholicks, both ancient and modern, and neither part hath yet been censured, or prohibited; and therefore it is evident, no Catholick is bound to this or that side.* By which one instance you may see, how much reason we have to bespeak them, as Christ did the Pharisees, Matt. 7. 5. *Thou Hypocrite, first cast out the Beam out of thine own eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the Mote out of thy Brothers eye.* Thus we see when their pretended signs come to be examined, they are lighter than vanity, as we have seen by this short and transient consideration of the most and weightiest of them.

§. 11. But, although other evidences are pleaded, yet the rest of them come in only as handmaids to the principal Character of miracles, for here it is that they set up their rest, and so must I too for a season. So the answerer of Bishop Laud: *The Church is proved to be infallible the same way that Moses, Christ, and his Apostles were proved to be infallible, and that was by the Sanctity of their life,*

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a Secunda sententia est, Pontificem etiam ut Pontificem, posse esse hereticum, & docere heresim:---hanc opinionem sequitur & tuetur Nilus, --- & aliquot Parisenses, & Gerson, & Almain; nec non Alphonsus de Castro, --- & Adrianus 6. Papa in questione de Confirmatione. Et post: Hec sententia non est proprie heretica, nam adhuc videmus ab Ecclesia tolerari, qui illam sententiam sequuntur, tamen videtur omnino erronea, & heresi proxima. De Pontif. lib. 4. c. 2.

and the glory of their miracles. The works of Christ did of themselves without Scripture prove Christ to be infallible; John 5. 36. and 10. 25, 38. and 14. 11. and the Apostles confirmed their words by signs, Mark 14. 19. (2) And consequently, the miracles done by the Church of Rome do without Scripture prove her infallibility. This is their last plea, they are now brought to their last legs; if this fail them, they are lost.

§. 12. *Ans.* 1. If the Miracles of Christ, and his Apostles did prove their infallibility in the doctrine they delivered, then they prove the fallibility of the Church of Rome, and their actual error, because they are visibly departed from that Doctrine, and if they prove any infallibility, they prove theirs who adhere to the Doctrine of the Scriptures. And so we thank them for this argument.

§. 13. *Ans.* 2. Although where miracles are true, and many, and evident, and uncontrolled, they give a great stroke to the proof of that doctrine, which is confirmed by them, yet it is false to say, that Christ, or his Apostles did require an absolute submission to, and belief of every doctrine, upon the bare account of miracles, without any reference to Scripture. And it is most certain, that Christ and his Apostles (notwithstanding their miracles) did prove their doctrines from, and allow their hearers to examine their doctrines by the Scripture. This strikes at the foundation of their argument and plea, and therefore I shall endeavour thoroughly to prove it.

§. 14. 1. This appears from the express commands of Christ, and the Apostles to that purpose. In the same place, where Christ bids them believe him for his works sake, he commands them to believe him for the Scriptures sake, Joh. 5. 39. Search the Scriptures. And if the former

prove the sufficiency of their argument from miracles : why should not the latter prove the sufficiency of the Protestants argument from Scripture ? especially if you consider, that Christ apparently prefers Scripture arguments before that of miracles : for in that 5th of *John*, where he ascends gradually from the weakest to the strongest testimonies, he placeth them in this order: First he argueth *John's* testimony, *vers.* 32. next, the testimony of his miracles, *vers.* 36. and last, the testimony of Scriptures, *v.* 9. And this more fully appears from *Luke* 16. 29. *If they hear not Moses, and the Prophets, neither will they be perswaded, though one rose from the dead.* Upon which words *Chrysostome's* gloss is full and cogent, (at least to them who pretend to rely upon the Fathers authority, and exactly to maintain their Doctrines :) his words are these ; *That you may see, that the Doctrine of the Prophets, (and consequently of the Apostles,) is more to be believed than the preaching of one raised from the dead ; consider this that every one that is dead, is a servant, but what the Scripture speaks, those things the Lord speaks (a).* Whence I thus argue : The Authority of the Lord is not only greater *in se*, but more credible *quoad nos*, than the authority of the Servant : This no man living will deny. But the Authority of Scripture is the authority of the Lord, and the Authority of the Pope, (adde a Council to him, if you please) is the authority of a Servant, yea (if you take that in earnest, which is intended only for a complement) a *Servant of Servants* : Ergo the Scripture is more to be credited than the Pope or Church. It was a

a ἵνα δὲ καὶ ἐπερωθῇ μάστις ἐπὶ ἀξιοπιστοῦρα ἢ οὐ προσήκον  
 διδουκαλία τῆς ἡδονισμῶν ἀπαγγελίας, ἐπειὶ οὐκ ὁπότεον ὅτι  
 νεκρὸς μὲν ἅπας δούλος ἐστίν, ἀδ' αἱ γραφαὶ φησὶνον τὴν πύλην τῆς  
 ἀντιθέσεως ἐφ' ἧς ἔσται, &c. 5. *offertum de Lazaro: concione 4.*

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good turn for the Pope, that *Greg. de Valentia* hath assured him, that if the Fathers do at any time talk sawcily; *Sua tunc constat auctoritas Romano Pontifici*, i. e. The Pope will keep his authority and infallibility in spite of them, else I am afraid this passage of *S. Chrysostomes* might have done his Holiness a discourtesie. And this farther appears from *2 Pet. 1.* where you have the question expressly decided; for after the Apostles had confirmed his doctrine from that miraculous appearance of God in the Mount, and that voice from Heaven, he adds, *vers. 19. We have a more sure word of Prophecie.* The *Bereans* did not believe *S. Paul's* infallibility, barely upon the account of his miracles, (nor are they therefore blamed) but did examine his doctrines by the Scriptures, (and for that they are commended) *Act. 17. 11.*

§. 15. 2. It was not the will of Christ, that all miracles should be believed, but he would have some miracles rejected, therefore he would not have all miracles in themselves, and for themselves, credited and owned. The Assumption I prove by three arguments.

§. 16. 1. Christs will was compliant with his Fathers will, and he came to fulfil Gods word, not to destroy it: But this was the express will of God, that all miracles should not be credited. This no man can doubt of, that reads *Deut. 13.* *If there arise among you a Prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and grveth thee a sign, or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other Gods, ---and let us serve them, thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you.* Whence it irrefragably follows, that if it could without blasphemy be imagined, that Jesus Christ had delivered such a doctrine as this, *Let us go after other Gods*, his miracles should have been disowned, and rejected, and therefore miracles of themselves are not to be credited.

§. 17. 2. Christ and his Apostles have foretold us, that miracles should be done by the teachers of false doctrines. Therefore miracles in themselves are no sufficient evidence of the truth of a Doctrine. The Consequence none can deny. The Antecedent (which alone can admit of doubt) is so evident from plain Scriptures, that I need only recite them. I will mention only two places: 2 Thess. 2. 9. *The coming of Antichrist is said to be after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders: and that you may see they are called lying wonders, not so much ratione materie, (because they are fabulous, and pretended,) as ratione finis, (because brought to confirm a lye,) it is said Apoc. 13. 13, 14. That he doth great wonders, so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by means of those miracles, which he had power to do.* I tell you, the world is well mended with the Church of Rome, that those miracles which in the Apostles days were foretold as a character of Antichristianity, are now become an evidence of Infallibility.

§. 18. 3. That evidence which Christ speaks of, as common to himself and counterfeit-Messiahs, is no sufficient evidence, nor at all to be equal'd with that evidence which is peculiar to the true Messias: But the evidence of miracles Christ speaks of, as common to himself and counterfeit Messiahs. This is plain from Mat. 24. 24. *There shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, that if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect.* The Scripture only is the sure *Βασίλειον*: and therefore what Divines observe of the Spirits testimony, that it is always conjunct with the testimony of conscience (and therefore it is not said, *μαρτυρεῖν*, but *συμμαρτυρεῖν*) the like we may discern in this, That where Christ urgeth the argument of Miracles, he doth it in conjunction with the Scripture, as we saw in Joh. 5. and the



the like we have *Joh. 10. 25-38.* where Christ pleads his works only as they are done *in his fathers name*, that is not only as he pretended his Fathers name, (for so did the false Christs *Mat. 24.*) but he really acted them with his commission, and in conformity to his will and word: So that the Scripture is the only *requiescent*, and not miracles in themselves, as this argument of the Papists fallily supposeth.

§. 19. *Ans. 3.* If it were admitted, that miracles (and the like may be said of all the rest of their marks of a Church) do prove the verity of a doctrine, yet they do not necessarily prove the Infallibility of him that doth those works, or receives that doctrine. Observe this, for it strikes at the root of this their last pretence. The notes of a man may prove his manhood, but they do not prove his nobility, wisdom, learning: these must be proved *alioquin* from another head. The Protestant notes of a Church do prove the being and truth of our Church, but not its infallibility; nor would they do it, if the Protestants pretended or desired it, (for mens pretences, or desires do not alter the nature of things.) I say, the notes do prove the Churches verity. But what are the privileges of that Church so constituted in being, and whether Infallibility be one of them, that is another question, and the resolution of it must be fetched from another Topick: now that this is so, I shall plainly and briefly, and (if I mistake not) undeniably prove. It is granted, that the gift of miracles was not peculiar to the Apostles, but was communicated by God to other Ministers and Christians in the primitive times: either then they must say, that every such Minister and Christian, singly considered, was infallible, (which no man ever yet was so impudent to assert;) or confess, that miracles are no sufficient evidence of Infallibility. It was enough that miracles did confirm the doctrines delivered, whether by

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Apostles, or other Ministers, for the confirmation of our Faith (though they had been otherwise fallible.) But if they will do that which never man did, *viz.* assert the infallibility of every such worker of miracles, then not only the Pope and Councils and Catholick Church are infallible, but also *Xaverius* the Jesuite, (of whose miracles they tell us so many fine stories, though he himself in his Epistles speaks not a syllable of them, and bewails the want of the gift of Tongues, a miracle (if any) most necessary for the conversion of the *Indians*,) I say, (if their own relations of these miracles may be credited) he must be infallible. And so here is another article of the Popish Creed: for besides the infallibility of the Church, Pope, or Council, here is the Infallibility of the Jesuites: *Non equidem in video, miror magis.* Yet farther, if miracles were solid proofs of Infallibility, yet they prove it only in such persons as do them; *Papa nec feritur, nec metitur.* Why should the miracles of *Gregory of Nazianzen* prove the infallibility of the Bishop of *Rome*? or how come the miracles of the thundring Legion to prove the infallibility of the thundring Church of *Rome*? or by what Magical art do those miracles which left poor *Bernard* (that did them) fallible, pass over to *Rome*, and render his Holiness Infallible? The Jewish Church was not therefore infallible, because the Prophets, who wrought miracles amongst them, were thereby proved infallible: (nor do the Papists assert the infallibility of that Church, by virtue of such a privilege belonging to those Prophets, but only because of that promise to the High Priest, *Deut.* 17.) In like manner, if their narrations concerning the miracles of *St. Francis*, *St. Dominick*, &c. were true, and if it were farther granted, that such miracles did prove their infallibility, yet this would no way prove the infallibility of the Romish Church in which they were done, so in diverse respects you see the argument falls to the ground.

§. 20. *Ans. 4.* Miracles are so far from proving the infallibility of the persons that do them, that they do not so much as prove the verity of doctrines delivered by them. That miracles have been done, (or at least such things, as the strictest observation of common prudence could not distinguish from miracles) by hereticks, yea by Pagans, is confessed by the Papists themselves, and evinced by the known examples of *Vespasian*, (who cured a blind man, as *Baronius* himself acknowledgeth, and all Historians relate,) and *Apollonius Tyaneus*, and others. You may see how this troubles *Card. Bellarmine*, that he is forced to this answer, *That the Devil had possessed the eye of that man, that he might seem to cure, when he ceased to hurt: Mutato nomine de te Fabula narratur:* For so, whatsoever miracles are done, or pretended by the Papists for confirmation of the doctrines of Devils, (and such are all repugnant to Scripture, and two of their doctrines are particularly so called, *1 Tim. 4. 1, 2, 3.*) may as well be said to be done by the collusion of the Devil. And yet (by the way) this is no blemish to Gods providence to permit such miracles, but an act of his wise counsel, and righteous judgement, that those who will not be won by the Word, and those glorious, abundant, and evident miracles done in the confirmation of it, may be hardened by other miracles, which (though far short in number, and commonly less notorious for observation, and less beneficial for use) God permits to be done, and justly may, having forewarn'd the world of such impostures, and forestall'd the minds of men with such clear irradiations of his truth, and such illustrious glory of miracles, that in comparison of them, the following wonders were no more than the glimmering light of a Glo-worm to the splendor of the Sun in his Meridian: Of which we have eminent instances in the wonders of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, after *Pharaoh* had hardened his heart against the word of  
 God,

God; and his glorious works, and afterward in the wonders of *Apollonius Tyaneus*, when men had wickedly rejected the offers of grace by Jesus Christ, and resisted the glorious light of his most excellent doctrine, and inimitable works. To make this more clear, I shall shew it under the hands of the greatest Champion of the Romish Church. *Esius* writes thus: *The Fathers and Historians do every where witness*, (so that here you have a multitude of testimonies in one) *that true miracles may be done without the Church by false Prophets, Hereticks, and Schismaticks* (a): and he quotes among other witnesses *Hilary*, and *Austin* and *Gregory the great* (a Pope, and therefore infallible in this assertion,) and a little after he doth so positively assert our doctrine, and so strongly batter down the pillar of the Papacy, that if you did not know the Author, you would judge him to be an absolute Protestant in that point, for after he had said, that *wonderful works may be done by hereticks, and Devils, in confirmation of false doctrine*, he adds, *but against this deceit Christ hath forewarned his faithful ones, saying, Do not go forth, do not believe.* It is to be noted, that he doth not say, *Examine diligently whether they be true miracles*; for the principal confirmation of the faithful ought to be the doctrine of the Church of old, confirmed by Christ and his Apostles by undoubted miracles (b). And *Maldonate* (though as sel-

(a) *Passim fatentur Patres, & testantur historiae, fieri vera miracula extra Ecclesiam etiam à Pseudoprophetis, hæreticis, & schismaticis, in sentent. lib. 2. distinct. 7. sect. 19.*

(b) *Fieri possunt ab hæreticis & Demonibus etiam in confirmationem falsæ doctrinæ mirabilia: — sed contra hujusmodi deceptionem fidelibus præmonuit Christus, dicens, Nolite exire, nolite credere. Notandum enim quod non dicit, Disquirite diligenter signa, num vera sint miracula. Nam præcipua confirmatio fidelium esse debet doctrina Ecclesiæ, jam olim à Christo & Apostolis per inæstimabilia miracula confirmata, Restat ubi sup. Sect. 19.*

dome-guilty of ingenuity, as most I have read) is forced to confess, that Hieron, Chrysost. Euthymius, and Theophylact do prove by many examples, that true miracles may be done by unbelievers, and (saith he) Christ admonisheth us that we do not believe false Prophets, even when they work true miracles; So little reason had the Author of *Land's Labyrinth* to call it a strange Paradox, that true miracles may be marks of a false doctrine, and to say, that all Divines confess, that true miracles are not feasible but by an extraordinary power of God, and that God thereby seals to the truth of a doctrine, chap. 9. sect. 5. and then to run away, as if he had thoroughly done his work, when you see his bold assertion confuted by more learned persons of his own party. Then again the said Maldonate puts a question, Whether no argument can be drawn from miracles, to prove the truth of a doctrine? and answers, It follows not, that no argument can be drawn from them, but no certain argument (a); that is, the argument from miracles is next door to none; it is probable, but not undeniable; it is conjectural, but not certain. And yet these new Doctors dare lay the foundation of all, viz. the Churches infallibility, upon meer conjectures, and probabilities. One would think the Jesuite had borrowed this, as he hath done hundreds of his best passages out of Calvin, and unadvisedly transcribed it into his commentary. And Andradius, the great defender of the Tridentine faith, is leaven'd with the same heresie: for he saith, St. Augustine contendeth, that sure and certain tokens of the Church are to be

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(a) Hieron. Chrys. Euthym. & Theoph. multis exemplis docent etiam per homines infideles vera fieri miracula. — Et nunc nos Christus, ne falsis Prophetis credamus, vera etiam miracula facientibus. — Quid, An ergo nullum ad probandam veram doctrinam argumentum ex miraculis sumi possit? Resp. Non sequitur non omnino nullum, sed non necessarium solum posse. in Mat. 7.22.

fetch'd out of the sacred Scriptures, because they are free from all suspicion of falsehood: but miracles may be done by the help of the Devil (a). And Gregory de Valentia tells us plainly, that miracles of themselves do not beget infallible certainty of the truth of a doctrine and Church, but on the contrary, the true and lawful Church gives us assurance of the truth of miracles, as S. Austin shews (b). To conclude this answer, I shall only add Bellarmin's words: Before the approbation of the Church, it is not evident, nor certain, by a certainty of faith, concerning any miracle, that it is a true miracle (c). And therefore the Churches infallibility cannot be proved by miracles, because it must be presupposed, before these miracles can give us any certainty.

§. 21. *Ans. 5.* If all the former difficulties were removed, it profits them not; for when a man comes to look into the pieces of their argument from miracles, he shall find such horrible mistakes, and woful impostures, that indeed it makes their cause the worse, and gives prudent men occasion to discern, that these are the Badges of the Antichristian faction, that they are the very signs, and lying wonders foretold 2 *Thef.* 2. I shall briefly look upon some of the parts of the argument.

1. They alledge for themselves the miracles of Christ, and his Apostles, and the first Fathers, which being done

(a) *Augustinus contendit Ecclesia certa atque firma indicia à sacris literis petenda esse, quia ab omni falsitatis suspitione sunt libera. Nam cum miracula—Demonum opera fieri posse dicat—Def. fid. lib. 2. pa. 239.*

(b) *Ipsa per se miracula non efficiunt certitudinem infallibilem de veritate doctrinae, & de Ecclesia legitima, sed contra potius Ecclesia vera & legitima certos nos de veritate miraculorum facit, ut Aug. indicat tom. 3. disp. 1. qu. 1. punct. 4. sect. 3.*

(c) *Ante approbationem Ecclesie non est evidens aut certum certitudine fidei de ullo miraculo, quod sit verum miraculum. lib. de notis Ecclesie, c. 14.*

in confirmation of a doctrine (as repugnant to theirs as Heaven is to Hell) are so far from proving their infallibility, that they demonstrate their Falshood and Heresy.

2. They plead all those miracles, as testimonies to the present doctrine of the Romish Church, which were done by such as though they lived in the communion of the Church of Rome, yet did complain of their corruptions, and condemn diverse of their present doctrines: as appears in *Bernard*, particularly in the great doctrine of Merit.

3. They alledge such miracles, as were done by Papists, in order to the conversion of Heathens to Christianity, which if really done by the cooperation of the divine power, do prove no more but this, That God thereby bare witness to the common cause of Christianity, (for confirmation whereof such miracles were done,) and not to their particular opinions, wherein they stand divided from other Christians.

4. They alledge such miracles, as for the generality of them their own Authors (such of them as have not sacrificed to impudence) acknowledge to be fictitious and ridiculous. What shall I tell you of that known censure of *Melchior Canus*, concerning the Legends of the Saints, (which are the great treasuries of popish miracles, and received by the poor belotted Papists with the same veneration, as the four Gospels) That the *lives of the Saints were written with less integrity and faithfulness, than the lives of the Heathen Emperors were written by Heathen authors* (a.) A dear sentence! it cost him the loss of a Car-

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a Dolenter hoc dico, — multò à Laertio severius vitas Philosophorum scriptas, quàm à Christianis vitas sanctorum. — Nostri plerique (Scriptores) vel affectibus inserviunt, vel de industria quoque multa confingunt, ut earum me nimirum non solum pudeat, sed etiam tædeat. Canus in operibus lib. II. c. 6. p. 533.

inals Cap. Agreeable to this was that of *Wives*, that the *Legends were written by a man of a Brassen forehead and a Leadn wit.* I shall forbear further particulars, for it were endless to enumerate all the complaints amongst their own Authors, (in whom there were any reliicks of candor and conscience) of the fictions in this kind, and the many notable instances of those impious frauds discovered upon the reformation of Religion, which before that time were reputed such certain miracles, that it was sufficient to make a man a Heretick to doubt of the truth of them. I shall add only this, that our Adversaries could not possibly do a greater spight to Christianity, nor a greater dishonour to those illustrious and unquestionable miracles done by Christ and his Apostles, in the face of all the world, so as their greatest enemies were forced to acknowledge the verity of them, than to compare with them, and to equal to them their fabulous relations concerning some seeming wonders, commonly done in a corner, and by such who served their own interest in them, and whose evidence was so dark, that the truth of them was questioned by their own friends, as you have now heard: as if their design were to make good that passage of one of their holy Fathers, who called the Gospel, *Fabula Christi*, the fable of Christ, in that known expression, *How great riches hath this Fable of Christ procured to us!* But if every syllable of what their Fabulists have recorded of their miracles were true, it will stand them in little stead, for the reasons before alledged, and proved. And therefore I conclude, that the miracles pretended, or done by Papists are no certain and sufficient evidence of their infallibility, and no solid Foundation for their Faith.

§. 22. *Ans. 6.* To which I shall only add this word at parting, that if miracles must pass for arguments, I know no reason, but Protestants have as good a Title to them



them as the Church of Rome: For although we do not use to boast of wonders, nor indeed have any need to use that Argument, having such solid evidence and sufficient ground for our Faith in the Holy Scriptures, yet if our adversaries will force us to it, I think our plea is as just as theirs, and we could very easily fill a Volume, not with such fictitious narrations as they stuff their Legends with, but with undoubted Histories of Protestant wonders. If the Antients esteemed the first propagation of Christianity by such contemptible means against such potent and universal opposition an eminent miracle, why may we not reckon this for a miracle, that the Reformation of Religion should be carried on by a despicable Monk in despite of all the power, policy, cruelty, flattery, learning of the last Age? We can tell them of miraculous cures of Diseases, and dispossessions of Devils by the prayers of God's people, of certain predictions of Future contingencies by Protestant Ministers, of Miraculous preservations and deliverances of Protestant Princes and Ministers from the Bloudy rage and deep designs of Papists, of eminent and unusual judgements of God upon Popish Persecutors, of all these there are remarkable instances already extant in Print, and such as the Papists were never able to disprove to this day; so that the Protestant cause is not inferiour to the Romish in this particular, but only here are two things evident in Protestants, which are not so in their Adversaries, *viz.* 1. The Modesty of the Protestants, that they do not boast of what they might justly plead. 2. The *αὐτάρκεια*, or self-sufficiency of the Protestant cause, that hath evidence enough in Scripture, and hath Arguments enough and to spare, whereas the penury of the Popish cause forceth them to catch at shadows for want of substance.

§. 23. Thus I have considered the several pretences of their great Doctors, and all the Pillars upon which this

vaſt ſtructure of the Churches Infallibility depends: I have ſtated the ſeveral pretenſions in the words of their own moſt approved Authors. I have weighed (I think I may ſay) all their conſiderable arguments by which they ſeek to maintain them in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and have found them light. I ſhall cloſe this particular with a brief reflection upon the whole matter, and the diverſe and repugnant courſes of their learned Authors in the reſolution and Foundation of their Faith; wherein we ſhall ſee theſe miſerable creatures running (like the falſe Prophet in *Jeremy*) from chamber to chamber to hide themſelves.

1. They made a bold venture at Scripture, and fairly offer'd to try their cauſe by it, for which they deſerve this Motto, -- *Magnis tamen excidit auſis*. But their own brethren pull'd them by the ear, and told them that 'would not do their work: *Gaiſayers can never be convinced out of Scripture, therefore you muſt confound them with Tradition*, ſaies their great *Salmeron* (a): And they ſoon found that to be true, which once a Popiſh Clergyman ſaid, when he had found a Bible; *He knew not who was the Author of it, but ſure he was, it was ſome peſtilent Heretick, for he every where condemns the Doctrines of our Church*.

2. They fly to the Fathers, and their infallible Authority: There upon a fair Tryal they are beaten out of the field. Upon debate they find the Fathers ſo ἀλλοπροσάμους ſo uncertain in ſome things, ſo poſitive againſt them in other things, that they preſently cry *Cruciſige* to thoſe, whoſe ears had rung with *Hofanna's* before, and down goes the infallibility of the Fathers.

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a *Protervire volentes Scripturis reſelli non poſſunt, ideo una traditione jugulandi ſunt*. *Salmeron* in tom. 13. lib. 1. comment. ſuper *Epistolam Pauli*.

3. Then they flie to Councils, and by all means they must be infallible; well, the Protestants follow them thither: That point comes to be scann'd. Instances are given of the error of Councils (if either Papists or Protestants may be Judges :) And (which had the greatest hand in the deposing of Councils) several notable passages are alledged out of Councils against the Popes Supremacy and diverse of the present Doctrines of the Romish Church: And upon the hearing of the cause, the Pope himself, and the most of the learned and considerable Papists now in the World, are resolved to trust Councils no longer with this jewel, and not content to deny, they dispute down the Infallibility of Councils, as I have shewed.

4. Then they flie to the Pope for help, and Jesuites cry out *Ευχρησται*, they have found the man that is infallible; Now *salut senex, salva res est*. Well, the Protestants joyn issue with them upon that, give many shrewd instances of the errors of Popes, alledge the expresse words of *Adrianus Sextus*, a Pope confessing the Fallibility of Popes (whom *Bellarmino* himself reckons among those who hold that the Pope, may an Heretick and teach Heresie (a).) And besides all this, two popish approved Councils are pleaded, *viz. Constance* and *Basil*, who absolutely deny the Pope's Supremacy and Infallibility. Well, what shall they do next?

5. Then there must be another device, a coalition of Pope and Council, and those meeting together are infallible.

Thus Infallibility is but a short-lived business, and dies at the expiration of the Council (for when they are dissolved, their Writings as well as those of Holy

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<sup>a</sup> *Lib. 4. De Romano Pontifice cap. 2. §. secunda sententia.*

Scripture are incapable of being a judge.) And thus they have devised an infallibility, made of a commixtion of two Fallibles, (an ingenious invention it is, by which one may make an infinite of two Finites, and of two guilty persons make up one innocent) But this also is destroyed by themselves. For although the divided parties seem to patch up an agreement, yet indeed they are as much at variance as ever. For the Jesuites make the Pope alone infallible, (and the Council only in dependance upon him.) And their Adversaries ascribe this infallibility to the Council alone, (and to the Pope only by communication from them,) And so they are both gone by the Arguments already mentioned under each of those heads. And if we may believe either, there is security in neither. And besides all these, diverse of their late Learned Writers reject the infallibility both of Pope and Councils, as *White, Holden, Cressy, Sir Kenelme Digby, &c.* who assert that neither one nor other, are further intallible than they keep to the Golden Rule of Tradition, and in that sense every Christian (*viz.* so far as he keeps to Tradition) is infallible.

6. The next device is oral Tradition, and the Authority of the present Church, who are therefore right because they say so. So this is a confirmation of their Faith answerable to his confutation, who answered all *Bellarmines* works with saying *Mentiris Bellarmine, Bellarmine thou lyest.* In like manner do these men confute all the Protestant Writers, and maintain their own Tenents, by saying, *recte dicis Domine Papa* or *mater Ecclesia*, that the Pope and present Church are in the right. Thus their bare assertion must pass for a solid demonstration, & their pretence that they hold nothing but what they had from the Apostles must be admitted as a proof that it is so, & shadows must go for substances. But this, besides the ridiculousness of begging the question, and craving what they

they cannot prove, is denied by the greatest pillars of their own Church, and such as with whom the Authors of this new and wild Fancy, will not compare themselves either for number or quality: For this is the known and most approved Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, that Tradition and Scripture both are two dead Letters, and partial rules; and there is besides these required a living Judge, endued with supreme and infallible authority, and without this judge we cannot infallibly understand, and are not bound to receive and believe either the one or the other.

7. At last they are so hard put to it, that they cannot leap out of the Circle, nor extricate themselves out of that Labyrinth in which their conceit of infallibility hath involved them, without Miracles: in come the marks of the Church and the glory of miracles. And thus far I shall discharge them from that invincible difficulty of proving the truth of their most famous Miracles, for if they can prove the infallibility of their Church, I will give it under my hand that they can work a miracle; For then they can reconcile contradictions, and they can do that which the ineffectual essayes of all their greatest wits have shewed to be above the wit of man, or Devil either (for doubtless those Popes who had Familiar acquaintance with the Devil, would not fail to take in his advice and assistance for the defence of their Infallibility) and therefore must needs be acknowledged for *Σαυαταρρη* or workers of miracles. Thus I have dispatched their several pretences, and shewed the nullity of them all, and consequently the nullity of their Faith.

§. 4. 24. There is only one thing to be added: They have one Argument more, which (although if their other cords break, they acknowledge this will not hold, yet because they use much to insist upon it) I shall consider in a few words: And that is an Argument taken from the pro-

vidence of God, and his care over the Church. It is fit and necessary (say they) that there should be some Infalible judge that could finally end all controversies, and therefore there is such a one, and they are that judge. I know no man in the world can leap further at three jumps. 1. There ought to be. 2. There is an infalible judge. 3. Their Church is it.

§. 25. *Ans.* 1. Why may not I turn their Argument upon them? God hath not provided such a judge, *Ergo* such a Judge is not necessary. When God thought fit to appoint a judge for the decision of some controversies in the old Testament, he thought fit to express the person, the place, his work, his power: And if the Popish doctrine be true, that this judge is of such necessity, that without him we cannot understand, and are not bound to believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, and that submission to this Judge is necessary to Salvation; it is ten thousand times more incredible that God (to whom all our present controversies were not unforeseen) should not leave us some mention of it in those Scriptures which are written for this end, *that we might believe*, John 20. 31. *and that we might be made wise unto Salvation*, 2 Tim. 3. 15. than that such a Judge is necessary. If God had but said instead of tell the Church, tell the Bishop of Rome, or hear the Bishop of Rome in all things, all those infinite and dreadful distractions, divisions, persecutions, errors and mischiefs, which have since risen in the world, had been prevented. So if reason may be judge, who can believe it consistent with the goodness of God, or Christs care over his Church, or Gods design in giving the Scriptures, to omit such a necessary point as this, upon which all the rest had depended; especially when Doctrines of far less concernment are there plainly recorded and often repeated?

¶ 4. 26. *Ans.* 2. If once men suffer their understandings to mount so high as to teach God what is fit, and positively to conclude that to be done which they judge fit to be done, it opens a gap to Atheism and to all imaginable Superstitions. What a fine model of Divinity should we have if once this door were open'd? It was fit that all the Translators of the Bible should have infallible guidance, that they might not mistake in a letter: It was fit that the Doctrine of the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility should have been ingraven upon every mans heart, or at least plainly revealed in the Bible, this being of more use than all the Bible besides, ( since the Pope could have supplied the want of a Bible ) And as *Chillingworth* well argues, it was as fit that every Minister should have been infallible; that all the Popes should be free from gross wickedness; ( as all other infallible persons recorded in Scripture were: ) It was fit that obstinate Hereticks should be consumed with fire from Heaven: Therefore by this Argument all these things are done. How much better and more becoming is it for a Christian to say with the Apostle, *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellour?* Rom. 11. 33. than boldly to measure God by our own fancies, and tie him to our fond imaginations.

¶ 4. 27. *Ans.* 3. If it be granted that there is an infallible judge, yet it doth not their work, for particular Christians are not infallibly assured of the Infallibility of their Church, ( unless they will say that every Papist is infallible; ) And therefore no particular Papist hath better ground for his Faith upon this score than the Protestants have: for they neither have nor pretend to better Arguments, upon which they believe their Church to be this Supreme and infallible judge, than what Protestants alledge to prove the Scripture to be judge, *viz.* Texts of Scripture, Tradition, Fathers, Councils, Miracles, rational Arguments,

Arguments, &c. And if a Protestant may be deceived in these when he infers from them the infallibility of the Scripture; why may not a Papist be deceived when he infers from them the infallibility of his Church, since he hath no better Arguments, nor more infallible guidance? And therefore as to particular Christians (of whom the whole Church consists, and about whom alone the care of Christ and Gods Providence is exercised) God hath not taken more effectual care for their infallible guidance according to the Romish Principles than according to ours: For as they say, Protestants have no security for their Faith, though the Scripture be infallible, because they cannot infallibly understand it, or believe this to be the Scripture: so say I, the Papists have no security of the infallibility of their Church (though the Churches infallibility be acknowledged true in it self) since they cannot infallibly know either that there is such an infallibility, or theirs to be the Church to whom it is promised.

§. 24. 4. It is neither necessary, nor suitable to the methods of Gods Providence and the declarations of his will, that there should be a final end and infallible judge of all controversies in this life: That which these men tell us was fit to be done, God hath told us he did not judge fit (and who is most credible, do you judge) 1 Cor. 11. 19. *There must be Heresies—that they which are approved may be made manifest.* God hath acquainted us, that it is his pleasure that Tares should grow with the Wheat unto the end of the World. In respect of wicked men it was fit (in regard of Gods Justice) that there should be stones of stumbling and Rocks of offence, for the punishment of those that were disobedient. And in regard of elect and sincere Christians, who live holily, and humbly believe, and pray fervently, and seek the true way diligently, such a judge is not necessary, God having provided for  
them



them other ways, by giving them the promise of his Spirit, and guidance into Truth, (which is as good security as the Pope himself hath, or pretends for his supposed infallibility) by that anointing which teacheth them all things, 1 *Joh. 2. 27.* in confidence of whose conduct they may say with *David*, *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel and afterwards receive me to Glory*, *Psal. 73. 24.* They are kept by Gods power, 1 *Pet. 1. 5.* and the care and strength of Christ, *Joh. 16.* And what need a Christian desire more? Truly saith *Amesius*, *God hath provided for the safety of the Godly, not for the curiosity and perverseness of other men.* And therefore this plea must go after all the rest, and they are still left in a forlorn and desperate, because in a faithless, condition. And thus having forced my way through all the obstructions which they laid before us: I know not what hinders, but I may pronounce the sentence, notwithstanding all their big looks and glorious pretences of Infallibility, notwithstanding all the noise of Scripture, Fathers, Popes, Councils, Tradition, Miracles; when things come to be scanned, it appears they have no foundation for their Faith, and consequently have no Faith. Lord be merciful to them.

## CHAP. VII.

### *Of the Solidity of the Protestant foundation of Faith.*

§. 1. **H**Apely they will say of us, as *Jerome* did of *Lactantius*, that he could *facilius aliena destruere, quam stabilire sua*, that we can more easily overthrow the foundation of their Faith, than make our

own good : I shall therefore ( though it be besides my present design, which is only to undeceive the world in that great cheat of Infallibility ) in few words enquire whether the Protestants have not a better and more solid foundation of their Faith, than the Papists have : And this I shall shew only by one Argument.

The Popish foundation of faith is such, as many of their own great Doctors are unsatisfied in; ( There being no foundation laid by any of them, but it is both denied, and disproved by others no less eminent of their own communion, (as I have proved at large) and such as is unanimously opposed by all Protestants and solidly disproved : ) But the Protestants foundation of Faith is such as all Protestant Churches ( of what denomination soever ) are agreed in, yea such as diverse of our most learned Adversaries acknowledge to be solid and sufficient. You will say, if you can prove this, the controversie will be at an end; and if I do not, let the Reader judge. There are but three things that need proof. 1. That the Books of Scripture ( which Protestants build their Faith upon ) are, and may be proved to be the word of God. 2. That in the substantial of Faith these Books are uncorrupted. 3. That the sense of Scripture may be sufficiently understood in necessary points.

§. 2. For the first : That the Protestants Bible is, and may be proved to be the word of God. It is true, when they meet with any of our Novices they use to put this perplexing question (as they call it) to them, How know you Scripture to be the word of God ? What matters it how I know it, seeing they acknowledge it, and by granting the thing make their question superfluous ? But I Answer, I know it even by the confession of our Adversaries : So they acknowledge and own the verity and solidity of our foundation ; and the testimony of an adversary against himself is undeniable. It may be of good use

use here a little to compare the several discourses of learned Papists to different persons, and how prettily they contradict themselves, and confute their own arguments. When the Papists dispute against us; they tell us, it is impossible to know the Scripture to be the word of God, but by the Churches Testimony. But if you take them in their lucid intervals, and their disputes against Atheists, or Heathens, then you shall have them in another tune: then *Bellarmino* can say, *Nothing is more evident, and more certain, than the sacred Scriptures, so that he must needs be a very fool that denies faith to them* (a). Here he can furnish us with several arguments to prove the authority of the Scripture (distinct from, and independent upon the Churches authority,) the variety of Prophecies, harmony of writers, works of Providence, glory of Miracles, consent of Nations, &c. Either then these arguments do solidly prove the Divine authority of the Scriptures, or they do not: if they do not, then *Bellarmino* is a Baffler to use fallacious arguments, and a lyar too, having said, *nothing more evident, nothing more certain*: if they do, then the Scriptures may be evidenced to be the word of God without the Churches Testimony, which they so boldly deny at other times. The like might I shew out of *Gregory de Valentia*, who musters up diverse convincing arguments, whereby even Heathens may be satisfied, that the Scripture is the word of God without the aid of the Churches authority (b). And the like is done by several of their learned and approved Authors: from which it plainly appears, That the foundation of Christianity and Protestantcy is one and the same, and that we have the same argu-

(a) *At sacris Scripturis, quæ continentur in Prophetis & Apostolicis literis, nihil est notius, nihil certius, ut stultissimum esse necesse sit, qui illis fidem habendam esse neget. De verbo Dei lib. 1.2.*

(b) *Analys. fidei lib. 1. c. 3.*

ments and evidences for the ground of our Faith as Protestants, (*viz.* for the Divine authority of the Scriptures, independently upon the Churches testimony) which we have as Christians, and that the Papists cannot say nor do any thing towards the subversion of the Faith of the Reformed Churches herein, but at the same time, and by the same art and arguments, they must oppugn the Christian cause, and acknowledge it untenable against a subtle Pagan or Atheist. And I desire the Reader to consider that this is not an answer or argument *ad hominem*, which I now insist upon, but fetched from the nature of the thing, and the verity of the Christian Religion. And for what they pretend, That without the Churches Testimony we cannot know that S. Matthews Gospel was written by him, and so the rest: they shall take an Answer of a very eminent and approved Author of their own, Melchior Canus: It is not much material to the Catholick Faith, that any book was written by this or that Author, so long as the Spirit of God is believed to be the Author of it: which Gregory learnedly delivers, and explains; For it matters not with what pen the King writes his Letter, if it be true that he writ it (a).

§. 3. The second thing is, That the Books of Scripture are not corrupt in the essential and necessary points of Faith. This a man may easily discern by looking into the nature and quality of those various lections, which are pleaded as evidences of corruption, where he shall quickly find them generally to be in matters of less moment, and such upon which Salvation doth not depend. But because the examination of this would be a tedious work

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(a) Deinde librum esse hujus aut illius Scriptoris non admodum interest Catholice fidei, dummodo Spiritus sanctus author esse credatur. Quod Gregorius erudite tradit & explicat: nec enim refert, qua penna Rex Epistolam scripserit, si verè scripsit, de locis Theolog. l. 2. c. 1. p. 73.

I shall save my self and Reader the labour, and shall prove it in general (as at first I proposed) from the confession of those of their own Brethren, (which out of a preposterous respect of the vulgar Translation, assert the malicious corruption of the Hebrew Text,) and positively maintain the incorruption of the Bible in matters of importance. Of this opinion are among the Papists, Ballermin, Arias Montanus, Driedo, Bannus, Tena, Acosta, Lorinus, and diverse others: If you please, we will hear the fore-man of the Jury speak for the rest, *I confess* (saith he) *that the Scriptures are not altogether pure, they have some errors in them; but they are not of such moment, that the Scripture is defective in things that belong to faith and manners. For for the most part, those differences and various lections consist in some words which make little or no difference in the Text* (a). To whom I will add the acknowledgement of a late Author S. Clara, whose words are these: *Considering a moral thing morally, it is altogether impossible, that the Books of the New Testament were or are considerably adulterated* (b). And so he goes on, proving what he had asserted. This may suffice for the second thing.

§. 4. For the third particular, (which alone now remains in doubt) concerning the sense of Scripture. My as-

(a) *Scripturae non sunt omnino integrae, ac purae, sed habent suos quosdam errores. Ceterum non tanti momenti sunt ejusmodi errores, ut in iis, quae ad fidem & mores pertinent, Scripturae sacrae integritas desideretur. Plerumque enim tota discrepantia variarum lectionum in distinctionibus quibusdam posita est, quae sensum aut parum aut nihil mutant. De verbo Dei l. 2. c. 2. versus finem.*

(b) *Rem moralem, moraliter considerando, plane impossibile est libras praeterim Novi Testamenti fuisse vel esse notabiliter adulteratas. System. theol. l. 1. c. 3.*

sertion is this: A Protestant hath or may have a sufficient assurance of understanding the sense of Scriptures in things necessary to salvation. This I shall briefly prove by this argument: Gods promise is sufficient assurance, (the Papists do not pretend an higher assurance for their Churches infallibility) but a Protestant is, or may be assured of this by Gods promise, as appears from *Joh. 7. 17.* *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.* Protestants have the assurance of Reason, and whatever the Papists talk, they have no other. It is true, they talk of several things, Fathers, Councils, Tradition, Motives of Credibility, &c. but in these and all other arguments, both Papists and Protestants agree in this, that when they go to settle and satisfy their consciences, though they hear many things, yet reason weighs them all, and rejects what it judgeth false, and holds fast what it esteemeth true and good: if that will not do, they have the assurance of the Spirit, which God hath promised to those that ask it, *Luke 11. 13.* and this is as much as the Church her self pretends. In a word, to strike the business dead, you shall see the perspicuity and evidence of the Scriptures, in things necessary to salvation, acknowledged by our Adversaries, from whom the force of Truth extorted these confessions: *That part of Scripture is plain and evident, which contains the first and chief principles of things to be believed, and the principal rules of living: So Sextus Senensis (a). We deny not, that the chief articles of faith, which are necessary to salvation to all Christians, are plainly enough comprehended in the writings of the Apostles: so Cesternus (b). And Salmeron,*

(a) *Illam Scripturæ partem apertam & dilucidam esse, quæ prima summæque rerum credendarum principia ac præcipua vivendi præcepta complectitur. Biblioth. sanct. lib. 6. Annot. 151.*

(b) *Non inficiamur præcipua illa fidei capita, quæ omnibus Christianis cognita sunt ad salutem necessaria, perspicue satis esse Apostolicis scriptis comprehensa, in Enchirid. p. 48.*

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having said, that all Doctrines and Traditions are to be examined by Scripture, he saith, *The Scripture is so framed and ordered by God, that it might be accommodated to all places, times, persons, difficulties, dangers, diseases, to drive away evil, to procure good, to overthrow errors, to stablish truths, to instil vertue, to expel vice (a).* And Hieronymus of Oleastro saith, *We are to praise God for it, that those things which are necessary to salvation, he hath made easie (b).* From all these things put together, I think I may say, it undeniably follows, (which I proposed to evince,) That the Foundation of a Protestants Faith is solid and sufficient, our Adversaries themselves being Judges.

§. 5. Only I must remove one block out of the way. Peradventure they will say, that if all these things be true concerning the word of God in its own Language, yet there is one notorious defect in the ground-work of the Protestants Faith, viz. That they build it upon the credit of a Translation, made by persons confessedly fallible. This, because they make such a noise with it amongst ignorant and injudicious persons, (however to men of understanding it is but an impertinent discourse) it will be convenient to say something to it, and but a little. To this then I answer. 1. The Papists cannot in reason charge us with that fault, of which themselves are equally guilty; nor can they accuse our Faith of that infirmity, to which their own is no less obnoxious: for the generality of unlearned Papists in the world have nothing but a Translation, or, which is worse, a meer Report, for the Founda-

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(a) Scriptura sic est à spiritu sancto concinnata, atque contexta, ut omnibus locis, temporibus, personis, difficultatibus, periculis, morbus, malis pellendis, bonis accersendis, erroribus jugulandis, dogmatibus statuendis, virtutibus inferendis, vitiis propulsandis sit accommodata. Salmeron in Prolog. 1.

(b) Gratificandum Deo valde quod, quæ sunt necessaria ad salutem, facilia fecit. super Deut. 30.

tion of their faith. If their suppositions were admitted, that the Pope or Council is the infallible judge of controversies, and that their Decrees are of undoubted verity, yet forasmuch as it is the lot of very few Papists to be eye or ear-witnesses of them, they are forced to receive the rules of their Faith, (*i.e.* the decrees of Popes or Councils) either from the meer reports of such men, whom they acknowledge fallible, unless they will (as indeed they may upon as good grounds, having once fallen into the humour of inventing) devise infallible Nuncio's, as well as an infallible Judge, or at best, if they be transmitted to them in writing, yet since they are written in a strange language, and unknown to vulgar Papists, they cannot understand them but by a Translation. And consequently the case of vulgar Protestants, who rely upon a Translation of the Decrees of holy Scripture, is not one jot inferiour to that of vulgar Papists, who rely upon a Translation of the Popes decrees.

§. 6. *Answ.* 2. Those Protestants that understand not the original languages, have a sufficient Foundation of their Faith in the Translations they enjoy, and that for two reasons. 1. They have so great a moral assurance of the verity of their Translation in all matters of moment, that no man can doubt of it, that is not within one remove of madness: and this is such a certainty, as the Papists have no reason to quarrel with: It is the observation of a grave author of their own, *Those things are certain amongst men, which cannot be denied without perverseness and folly* (a). And again, *Such things as are delivered by common consent of Histories, it is a most foolish*

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(a) *Certa apud homines ea sunt, que negari sine perversacia & stultitia non possunt. Causa loc. com. lib. 11. de humanae historiae auctoritate c. 4. p. 468.*



thing either to deny them, or doubt of them (a). Now to apply this. A man may have as great an humane assurance as is possible of the verity of our Translations by the collation of differing Translations, made by several persons in diverse times and places, and they too in several languages, and sometimes by men of opposite principles in Religion, yet all agreeing in the main; by the impossibility of a design among some learned men to cheat the vulgar by a false Translation, there being so many watchful eyes upon them in every Translation, so little benefit by such a deceit, such extreme danger and disgrace attending upon it, such improbability of any success: by the ridiculousness and impertinency of popish exceptions against our Translations, (as may be seen in the discourses between Dr. Fulk and Gregory Martin upon that Subject) being in the gross so inconsiderable, that if all were granted they desire, we need nothing else to confute them but their own Doway Bible, or Rhemish Testament, and several other ways. In a word, the Papists themselves have not so good security for that, upon which all their Religion & Infallibility depends, viz. whether *Alexander* the 7th be a regular Pope; for if he be not a Priest, which he is not, say the Papists, if his Ordainer did not intend to make him a Priest, (and who knows another mans intentions?) or if there was any Simony in his election to the Popedom, (which how is it possible for us to be assured that there was not?) in which case by their own profession the Election is null, and all the actions done by him afterward: so till they have better fortified their own Faith, I am sure they have no reason to quarrel with ours.

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(a) *Plurima sunt ejusmodi, quæ communi historicorum consensu traduntur. Hæc non modo negare, sed in his etiam addubitare, stultissimum est. ibid.*

§. 7. 2. There is more than a moral assurance, even a Divine Faith of the verity of that Scripture which is contained in our Translations. For whereas, amongst other arguments alleaded by Christians, and owned by the Papists themselves, they urge the Majesty of the Stile, the sublimity of the matter, the efficacy of the Doctrine, and its influence into the hearts of men, (of which *Gregory de Valentia* saith, *I know not whether it be a greater argument for the Scriptures than all the rest, yea than miracles, confession of adversaries, &c.*) (a). Now the power of these arguments is not confined to the Original languages, but common to true Translations: For it is not the shell of the words, but the kernel of the matter which commends it self to the consciences of men, and that is the same in all Languages. The Scripture in English, no less than in Hebrew or Greek, displays its lustre, and exerts its power, and discovers the Characters of its Divine original. The most unlearned Christians do ordinarily feel such a supernatural force in the Scriptures, (though conveyed to them only in a Translation,) they find in themselves, and observe in others such a sharpness and energy, in oft-times convincing the proudest sinners, converting the most profligate Wretches, comforting the most distressed consciences, that it forceth them to say, *Non vox hominem sonat*, God is in this Scripture of a truth. When a man finds the Law of God in English, converting the soul, and enlightning the eyes, (which was *David's* argument for its Divinity, *Psal. 19.*) when men feel the Scripture in the English Translation quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul, and spirit, and the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the Heart: (which was *S. Paul's* argument *Heb. 12.*)

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(a) *Anal. fidei lib. 2. c. 20.*

and so I might instance in diverse other properties: what can they infer, but that it is the voice of God, though he speaks by an Interpreter, that it is the water of life, though conveyed to them in the glass of a Translation?

§. 8. *Answer* 3. At worst, this may fully stop their mouths, that the argument doth not touch the merits of the cause, nor shake the Foundation of our Faith, but only concerns some particular person, viz. such as are ignorant of, and unlearned in the original languages. So the defect lies in the persons, not in the cause, nor in the ground-work of our Faith, but in the neglects of some men, to build up themselves fully upon it. If any man be unsatisfied with Translation, he hath under God a remedy in his own hands: if he like not the Cistern, he may go to the fountain, if he will take the pains of so long a journey. A little industry, and diligent use of those means and helps which are offered even to vulgar Christians, will wholly remove this difficulty, and put a period to this argument.

§. 9. I shall conclude this discourse with the consideration of two particulars. The first is an objection they urge against the solidity of our Faith. The second, is one plea more they have for the solidity of their own. The first is an objection, which they frequently urge in all their Treatises: That circular way of argument, which we justly object against them, they boldly retort upon us, and tell us, that we have no way to prove the Scripture but by the spirits testimony, and no way to prove the Spirits testimony, but the Scripture. This is counted one of the hardest knots, and therefore it will be worth the while in few words to untie it, (though it may seem a little heterogeneous to my present design.)

§. 10. 1. They have no reason to object this circle to us, that they cannot free themselves from. I speak not now of the other famous Circle of the Church and Scrip-

ture, which their most learned Authors of late have ingenuously confessed, ) but here is another Circle: The Papists have *Circulum in Circulo*. For they profess a man cannot know the Church, but by the Spirit, nor the Spirit but by the Church: That a man cannot know the Spirit, nor the mind of the Spirit, nor distinguish it from false and counterfeit ones, but by the Church, is their great principle: *He cannot know it* (say they) *by the Scripture, unless he read it with the Churches Spectacles*; Revelation they do not pretend to, therefore this is known only by the Church, (to whom the discerning of Spirits belongs,) and by others only from the Churches authority, and infallible Testimony. But that is a clear case: the only doubt lies about the other Branch, *viz.* That a man (according to their principles) cannot know the Church but by the spirit: and that you shall have under the hands of their great Masters. Stapleton's words are these: *This secret Testimony is altogether necessary, that a man may believe the Churches judgement and testimony about the approbation of the Scriptures, neither will Faith follow without this inward Testimony of the spirit of God, although the Church attest, commend, publish, approve the Scripture a thousand times over* (a). So *Canus* tells us, that *Humane authority, and other motives, are not sufficient inducements to believe, but there is moreover a necessity of an inward efficient cause, i. e. the special help of God moving us to believe* (b). What can be more plain? Let them an-

(a) *Arcanum hoc testimonium necessarium prorsus est, ut quis Ecclesie testimonio ac judicio circa Scripturarum approbationem credat, neque absque hoc interno Divini Spiritus testimonio, etiamsi millies Ecclesia attestetur, commendetur, promulgetur, approbet Scripturas, fides consequatur. Defens. contra Whitak. lib. 1. c. 1.*

(b) *Statuendum est auctoritatem humanam & incitamenta omnia illa predicta, sive alia quaecunque adhibita ab eo qui proponit fidem, non esse sufficientes causas ad credendum, ut credere tenemur; sed præterea opus est interiori causa efficiente, i. e. Dei speciali auxilio moventis ad credendum; Loc. Theol. lib. 2. c. 8.*

swer themselves; and that will serve our turn. Either they must leave themselves in the Circle, or help us out. *Jam sumus ergo pares.* And it is unreasonable, that they should urge that as a peculiar inconvenience of our Resolution of Faith, to which their own is no less obnoxious.

§. 11. 2. It is false, that we have no other way to prove the Scripture to be the word of God, but the Spirit's internal Testimony. They cannot be ignorant, that we have diverse arguments of another nature, and independent upon that Testimony of the Spirit, by which the authority of Scripture is solidly proved. And Papists as well as Protestants have substantially defended the cause of the Scriptures against Pagans and Atheists. Either those arguments are solid, rational, and convincing, or they are not: If they say, they are not; then be it known to all men by these presents, that the Assertors of Popery are the Betrayers of Christianity: If they be, then is the Scripture proved other ways, than by the Spirit's testimony. How can the Adversaries vindicate themselves, either from shameful ignorance, if they do not know, or abominable malice, if they wittingly bely us, that we have no argument to prove the Scripture, but the Testimony of the Spirit? What, are those glorious miracles, by which the Scripture was sealed and propagated, now become no argument? Is the Transcendency of the matter, and majesty of the Style, and admirable power of the Word of none effect, to prove the Scriptures Divinity? Are not the patience of Martyrs, the concurring testimony of Jews and Heathens to the truth of Scripture-relations, the verity of predictions, and the like, as solid arguments now, as they were in the primitive times, when the Fathers confounded the learnedest Pagans by these and such like arguments? If they be (as they must affirm, unless they will turn perfect Pagans, as they are in the half way to it already,) then their Assertion is false, That

we cannot prove the Divinity of the Scripture but by the Spirits Testimony, and the Circle which they impute to us, is indeed in their own Brain, and their Argument is the fruit of their Vertigo.

§. 12. 3. Here is no Circle, because, although the Spirit and Scripture do mutually prove one another, yet they do it *in diversogenere*, in diverse ways, and several capacities: but a Circle is, when a man proceeds *ab eodem ad idem eodem modo cognitum*, when a mans knowledge proceeds from the same thing to the same thing in the same way. But in this case, though the thing be the same, yet the way of knowledge varies, and that breaks the Circle. The Scripture proves the Spirit *per modum objecti & argumenti*, objectively, and by way of argument, by suggesting such truths to me, from which I may collect the *revelata* of the Spirit, and prove its Divinity. But the Spirit proves, or rather approves the Scripture *per modum causae effectivae & instrumenti*, as a Divine instrument infused into the soul, whereby I am enabled to apprehend such verities as are contained in the Scripture. The Papists indeed cannot get out of their Circle of Church and Scripture, because each of them is the argument by which they prove the other: the argument, nay the only argument (say they) for which I believe the Scripture, is the authority of the Church testifying it: and the argument for which they believe the Church, is the authority of the Scripture. And here the Circle is so gross and evident, that it is acknowledged by diverse of their own late learned Authors. Holden confesseth in express terms, that they who resolve their Faith in this manner (and so do almost all the learned Papists in the world) do unavoidably fall into a Circle (a). So the late Answer-

(a) In Circulum hunc inevitabiliter illabuntur, & in orbem turpissimè saltantes &c. Holden de resolnt. fidei lib. c. 9.

rer of Bishop Laud confelleth, it is a vicious Circle to prove Scripture from the Churches Tradition, and the Churches Tradition from Scripture (a), (as they generally do, some few Excentrical Spirits excepted:) nor can he get out of it, but by returning to that Vomit, which his former Masters had discharged themselves from, viz. to prove infallibility by miracles, and the motives of credibility. But in our case it is quite otherwise, for the Spirit works *ut instrumentum*, by way of Instrument, the Scripture, *ut argumentum*, by way of Argument. It were an absurd aspersion to call this a Circle, if any man should say: I believe the Sun to be bigger than the Earth, because my reason tells me it is so, and I believe my reason saith true, because Mathematical arguments convince me it must needs be so. That which frees this discourse from the Circle, is, that the Mathematicks prove it, *ut argumentum*, Reason proves it *ut instrumentum*: and the same may be said in the present case. I shall further illustrate this by a similitude or two: It is here, as when a man through the infirmity of his eye, apprehends a thing to be less than it is. There are three ways, whereby this man may be convinced of his error: 1. By argument taken from the thing it self. 2. By bringing the object nearer to the Eye, (which was at too great a distance) whereby it appears in its due proportion. 3. By curing the infirmity of the eye. Thus the Physician that removes the distemper of the eye, and restores it to its native strength and vigor, may be said to convince him. Now to apply this. The Spirit of God doth not convince a man of the Divinity of the Scriptures the first way, as a Philosopher, but the last way as a Physician; not by an elucidation of the object by arguments, but by the eleva-

(a) Laud's Labyrinth, chap. 5.

tion of the faculty, or by anointing the eyes with eye-salve, and curing its infirmity. To which the second may be added, *viz.* That the Spirit of God brings his word, and the characters of its Divinity impressed upon it, nearer unto us, and writes in the heart according to Gods promise to that purpose, and so we see the object better, by reason of its approximation to us. Or as it is with a Philosopher, when he reads a Book, written in the defence of some position, (as suppose the doctrine of the circulation of the Blood,) possibly his mind may be discomposed, and his Brains by reason of some peccant humour much distemper'd, and in this case he reads the Book, but is not at all satisfied by it: afterwards, Physical means are applied, whereby the brain is restored to its native constitution, and purged from those distempers, whereby it was clouded: now he returns to the book again, and reads it over anew, and yields himself captive to the opinion. You see here is no change of the old arguments, nor any addition of new ones; only the impediments which were in the faculty, or the organ, are removed. Just so it is in the matter now in controversy: The Spirit of God doth not prove the Scripture to me by arguments, which I never had before, but by the illumination of my mind, to apprehend the arguments which I did not apprehend before. It is with men, as it was with *Hagar, Gen. 21.* there was a Well of water, but she saw it not till God open'd her eyes, *vers. 19.* There is a self-evidencing light in the Scriptures, only the Spirit of God cures that blindness of mind, whereby the Devil hindered the world from discerning it. Thus the Spirit convinced the Jews of the Truth of the Gospel by removing the vail, which was upon their hearts in the reading of *Moses, 2 Cor. 3. 15, 16.* And so God convinced his elect among the Heathens, not by discovering any more arguments to them, than he did to the reprobates among them,



them, for the same doctrine and arguments were preached to both alike, but by opening their eyes to see what others saw not, *Act. 26. 18.* and by opening their hearts to receive what others would not receive, as *Act. 16. 14.* To conclude, forasmuch as the testimony of the Spirit is not the Argument for which, but only the Instrument by which they believe; and on the contrary, the Testimony of Scripture is the proper argument for which they believe, it is most evident, that they work in several capacities, and so we are fully discharged from that Circle, which they causlessly charge us with, and notwithstanding this objection, the foundation of our Faith standeth sure. This is the first particular.

§. 13. The other particular concerns the Popish foundation: for some of the Romanists finding themselves so wofully intangled in the business of infallibility, are grown sick of the notion. *Cressy*, the English Apostate, in his *Exomologesis* confesseth, That *Infallibility* is an *unfortunate word*, *combated by Mr. Chillingworth with too great success*, *that he could wish the word were forgotten, or at least laid by*: these therefore tell us, that if the Infallibility of the Church be denied, yet a Papist hath sufficient ground for his faith in the Churches authority, in which he is obliged to acquiesce, and whom he must hear in all things: and this way some others go. This I thought fit to mention, that the world may see the complexion of a Romish conscience, and the desperate shifts which the wretchedness of their cause forceth them to. But because the absurdity of this new fancy doth *suâ luce constare*, I shall dismiss it with two remarks upon it.

1. That it is disclaimed by the Romish Church; (and it were a frivolous thing to concern our selves in refuting all the wild fancies of their particular Doctors.) It is true *Cressy* saith, *No such word as infallibility is to be found in any*

any Counsel: the good man had forgot the definition of the Council of *Basil*, wherein they call it a pernicious error, to say, that a Council can err; (the passage I cited before,) or else he meant to be witty, for it is very true, that *non potest errare* is not the same word with *Infallibility*, though it be the same thing. Nor do the Papists only assert the infallibility of their Church, but generally acknowledge, that without this, their Faith would have no solid foundation, nor their Religion any certainty. I shall not multiply instances in so known a thing: you have many instances in one, in that forementioned passage of the Council of *Basil*, That if once that pernicious error were admitted, that general Councils may err, the whole Catholic Faith would totter (a). And *Bellarmino* in a forequoted passage confesseth, That it is a most unreasonable thing to require Christians to be finally subject to the judgement of that Church which is liable to error (b). And therefore I need not cast away precious time in confuting those particular fancies of some private Doctors, which are directly repugnant unto the confessed opinion of the Pope, and the Decree of a general Council.

2. This is so far from mending the matter, that it makes it far worse: for he that saith, *I am bound to believe the Church in all things, because she is infallible in all things*, speaks that which is coherent in it self, and the consequence is agreeable to reason; the only fault lies in the Antecedent. But he that saith, *I am bound to believe the Church in all things, though she may err in many things* (and none knows how many) throws himself and me upon such desperate Rocks, as none but a mad-man would run upon. When *Bellarmino* delivers that desperate doctrine, That if the Pope should command us to sin, we are

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(a) In responsione Synodali.

(b) Lib. 2. de Conc. c. 3.

bound to obey him: and when others have said, That if the Pope should lead thousands to Hell, we must not reprove him: their followers mollifie the harshness of those assertions with this favourable construction, That the Propositions are only Hypothetical, depending upon such conditions, as by reason of the promise of Infallibility, can never be fulfilled, for (say they) the Pope cannot command sin, and cannot lead men to Hell: and this, if true, were a plausible evasion. But to tell me, that if the Pope or Church may err, yet I am bound to believe and obey them in all things, this is to make that my duty, which God hath threatned as a terrible Curse, *2 Thes. 2: viz.* to believe lies: This is to confront the Apostle, *Act. 5.* and to say, That it is better to obey men than God, when their commands are contrary, this is to bring me under a necessity of that Woe, denounced against such as *call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and light for darkness, Isa. 5. 20.* This is to say, That I am bound to follow my blind Leaders, though it be into the ditch, that I am under an obligation of offending God by making him a lyer, and of damning my own Soul: This is to say, That the Israelites were bound to obey *Aaron's* Idolatrous decree, concerning the observation of the Feast of the Calf: nay more, That the Jews were bound to obey their Church in putting Christ to death, though they had at that time known him to be the true Messias. In a word, such and so many are the prodigious absurdities which would inevitably follow from that wild assertion, that madness it self, unless in its highest Paroxysme, could not equal it: and when the Authors of it come to themselves, or return to the judgment of their own Church, or when their Church comes over to their opinion, and lays aside their bold pretences to Infallibility, they may expect a farther Answer.

But since I wrote this, I find, Mr. *Cressy* hath saved me the labour of farther Answer: for in his second Edition,  
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(and *secunda cogitationes sunt meliores*) I find him sick of his former notion: I suppose he hath met with sharp rebukes from his wiser Brethren, what penances or censures they have inflicted on him I know not, but the effect is visible, and the man is brought to a recanting strain. And that he may have some colourable palliation for it, he pretends, he was mis-understood, and that he never meant to deny Infallibility to the Church, save only in the most rigorous sense that the Term could import, and therefore he roundly asserts, *That the Church can neither deceive believers that follow her, nor be deceived herself*, Exomolog. §. 2: Ch. 21. And Infallibility and Authority are in effect all one as applied to the Church: for to say, that the Church hath authority to oblige all Christians to receive her Doctrines, and withal to say she is fallible, is extremity of Injustice and Tyranny. Appendix to Exomolog. cap. 5. num. 14. So this pretence is also gone after the rest: and therefore from all that hath been discoursed and proved, I may take the boldness to conclude, That the Faith of a Papist, if he keep to his own principles, hath no Foundation, or is not built upon the Rock, but meerly upon the Sand, or (in the Prophets language) *they have forsaken (the Scriptures,) the fountain of living water, to hew out unto themselves broken Cisterns, that can hold no water.*

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*An*

*An APPENDIX by way of re-  
flection upon Captain Robert Everards*

*Epistle, and account of his Conversion and  
Submission to the Romish Church; and Mr.*

*Cressy's EXOMOLOGESIS.*

**S**INCE the finishing of the foregoing Treatise, I was told of an Epistolary Discourse of Captain Everards, and withal that the substance of it was fully Answered by what I had there discussed, only it was convenient to accommodate the passages relating thereto to the several parts of his Epistle: Upon this suggestion I procured the Epistle it self as enlarged in the second Edition, and diligently read it once or twice over: And I confess I was at first dubious whether I should take any notice of it, partly because I saw it was nothing but a collection out of others (as he most properly calls it) and a repetition of those old Sophisms, that have been answered and exploded an hundred times over, and partly because I discerned by the spirit of the man, and the frame of his Discourse, and the circumstances of his change, that there was no likelihood at all of retriving and reclaiming him, how clear and irresistable soever the evidence and arguments were that should be produced. He that hath but half an Eye may see a design in the whole management of the change: And although he assures us with a *teste meipso*, that he is not biassed by worldly interests, and private ends, he must allow discreet persons the liberty of their

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Faith in that particular, and not take it amiss, if seeing the feebleness of his Arguments, and their insufficiency for the producing of such a change, they suspect it was done by the power of interest, which is so secret an affair, and its method so cryptical, and the ways of serving it so various, that no wise man will believe it impossible; and I am sure the contexture of his Discourse, and the manner of his process doth not render it at all incredible. And these considerations inclined me to silence. But on the other side, when I considered, that the hand of *Joab* sufficiently appears in the penning of this Epistle, that it was a collection of the strength of more Learned Writers, and a conjunction of abler heads than his own, who were resolved in this occasion and instance, to represent what could in brief be said to persuade unsettled persons to change their Religion; and (whatever other mens opinions are) what a reverend esteem the Author hath of it, who tells us *he saw reason enough to believe it could not be Answered*, pag. 88. and that he challengeth it as a piece of justice to shew him his errors; I thought it not amiss to take some notice of it, knowing that if what I should say were unsuccessful to him, yet it would not be unacceptable to God, (since *we are a sweet savour of God in them that believe, and in them that perish*) and that if I were not an instrument of Gods mercy to him, in reducing him to the truth from which he hath revolted, yet I should be an instrument of Gods Justice, and a witness on Gods behalf to leave him without excuse.

In one thing I must crave Mr. *Everards* pardon, if I do not take his Counsel in Answering him *agm. vobis* and setting down each of his Paragraphs before the several Answers: It is a course which, I confess, I do not approve of in the answering of other Authors, because it runs a man into personal contels, and petite animadversions,

versions and catching at little advantages; and so expends the Answerers pains, and the Readers patience, and the buyers money to no purpose: And if I did like it in some others, yet really he must excuse me if I do not esteem him so classical an Author, nor his Epistle so weighty a Discourse, as to deserve such solemn consideration. Yet this I shall promise him (and I call God to witness it) that I shall not wilfully decline any part of it, wherein his strength may lye, but shall endeavour to the utmost of my poor skill to single out such things as are most plausible and considerable, and such, as if they be solidly answered, the rest will fall of course, or need no further trouble.

What I have to say, I shall reduce to two heads. 1. Personal. 2. Dogmatical. The first I shall pass over in few words, because it concerns not the merit of the Cause, and yet it is not convenient wholly to neglect it, because it is set forth *μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας*, and Mr. *Everard* (whom I should by no means deprive of his due praise) hath shewed wit and art in it; something therefore must be said to disabuse such as are too apt to be deceived with good words and fair speeches, and the influence of Examples. And if there be some seeming harshness in my expressions, it must not be ascribed to my Temper, (which my Friends will assuage me from) or principles, or hatred of Mr. *Everard*, (a person known to me *nec beneficio, nec injuria*) but to the discharge of my Duty (which is to rebuke such as he is *ἀποτόμως* sharply) and the necessary caution of others. My personal Reflections shall only be two: The first upon the quality of the person: The second, the occasion and manner of the Change.

1. As for the quality of the person. I must confess I am not at all surprized with the Apostasie (for so I must call it with *S. Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 4. 1. and 2 *Theff.* 2. 3.) of a per-

son of his Character, as we have it drawn by his own pen :  
 pag. 4. *When I profess myself against Infant-Baptism, I had  
 run through almost (if not altogether) all the several Profes-  
 sions of Christianity then appearing in this Kingdom. It is  
 no new thing that a giddy-headed man should get a fall.  
 It is no more than was long since foretold, and at this day  
 in this person those Scriptures are fulfilled which tell us,  
 that the unlearned and unstable should wrest the Scripture  
 (as this Epistler most horribly doth) to their own destru-  
 ction, 2 Pet. 3. 16. That such as received not the Truth in  
 the love of it, should be given up to strong delusions to believe  
 lies, 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11. That such as were ever learning  
 and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth should  
 be led away, 2 Tim. 3. 6, 7. that evil men and seducers  
 (as he now acknowledgeth he was) should wax worse and  
 worse, deceiving and being deceived, verse 13. that unstable  
 souls should be beguiled, 2 Pet. 13.*

- It is not at all strange, that he that despised the per-  
 sons, vilified the Function, contemned and forsook the  
 guidance of able and faithful Protestant Ministers, by  
 whom he might have been easily antidoted against this  
 Infection, should be betrayed into the hands of Romish  
 Priests. It is not strange that he that loved to wander  
 should *antiquum obtinere*, and having passed thorough  
 all the varieties which *England* affords, should gratifie  
 his temper, and follow his inclinations to see what news  
 at *Rome*. In the mean time it concerns all Protestants,  
 and especially persons of the same complexion and con-  
 dition, with fear and reverence to behold the just and  
 tremendous judgment of God upon unsettled and unstable  
 Christians, and such as are given to change, whilst they  
 see these smaller rivulets of lesser errors leading to the  
 dead sea of damnable delusions. And as we have many  
 woful instances of poor deluded souls, that having  
 wandred from party to party, from opinion to opinion,  
 from



from congregation to congregation, have at last been swallowed up, some in the gulph of downright Atheism, others of the besotting dotages of the Quakers; so we have here an instance of one, whom the same wildness and wantonness of opinion hath betrayed to Popish impostures.

The second personal reflection concerns the occasion and manner of his change, which in brief is this, as himself represents it, *pag. 5, 6, &c.* He falls into the company and acquaintance of a Lay-papist ( which he had been always told, and so supposed that they were an ignorant Generation ) and he proposeth and presseth an Argument, which the Captain could not answer, and therefore submits and borrows two or three Popish Books from that Gentleman; (*viz. the Question of Questions, Fiat Lux, and Knots* answer to *Chillingworth* and so the work is done, my Captain is conquered, and become a Papist, or (*stylo novo*) a Roman Catholick. Upon this relation I shall take the boldness to make these following Animadversions.

1. In general, it is very observable how easily he gives up the cause: How valiantly the Captain fought in the field I know not, but sure I am, if he fought at the same rate that here he disputes, no man could desire an easier Adversary. Happily because he was about to commence into a belief of the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass, he was resolved his Antagonist should not have a bloody victory. I shall adventure to commend this pattern as an effectual receipt to make Papists, and (that you may see it is a πολυχηρὸν if not a πανάγριμον) it will indifferently serve to make Turks, Jews, Pagans, or Hereticks of any kind. Let a person unlearned or unstudied in the point he debates (such as none that read this relation will deny this Author to have been, unless they be such themselves) enter the lists with some able

Champion of the adverse party ( a Character which the Captain himself ascribes to his then Antagonist, ) and when he meets with an Objection that himself cannot answer, let him conclude it unanswerable ( which our Author did ) and read two or three such Books as his Adversary shall put into his hand, if this do not speedily and effectually work the cure, he may be given over for desperate.

\* 2. Though to determine that this supposed conversion was a plotted business, may seem an intrusion into the Divine prerogative to judge the heart, yet this I may safely say, that it looks so like a plot, that it requires more than an ordinary charity to believe it was not. For as the Philosopher well observes, no man must (and no serious man will) forsake a solid and well grounded Truth, for some subtil objection suggested by a crafty disputer, which he cannot answer. If it was not a designed thing, how can it be imagined, that in a matter of Salvation and damnation, he should be so grossly negligent in the use of means to come to the knowledge of the Truth and the answering of his Objection? Otherwise who can believe that he would not have addressed himself to some able Protestant Minister or Scholar to see whether he could answer it, ( unless peradventure, through the pride of his heart he scorned the advice of Ministers, and thought himself wiser than his Teachers, and then no wonder such pride had a fall, ) or would not by the direction of some knowing Protestants have rather searched into some Protestant books for an Answer, ( as here he falls upon the reading of Popish Authors by the advice of a Papist ) if he really were a Protestant at that time, when he pretended to be so ; for if this Captain had understood those controversies, and spent that time in the reading of the solid Books of excellent Protestant Authors, and grounding himself in the principles of Religion,

gion, which he spent in talking and teaching others, and scribbling of idle Pamphlets, and railing at Learned and Godly Ministers, these objections, which through his ignorance and unacquaintedness with those points seemed new to him, would have been discovered to him as they are to others, to be but Coleworts not twice but twenty times sod, and Arguments long since exploded.

3. To this let me add, the wonder is the greater, and the Design more credible, to consider that his conversion should be wrought by such Authors, as *Fiat Lux*, and *Knots Answer to Chillingworth*: The former nothing but an heap of words, and an empty sound, which if stript of all its gauderies, and Rhetorical flashes, (apt to take none but children in understanding) and all the weight of Reasons were pickt out, and brought together, it might (without such Art as was shewed about *Homer*) be put into a Nut-shell, unless happily that was the Argument that convinc'd him, that the Author tells us (*us*, I say, who are English-men, and remember the *Marian* Persecution, and the *Irish* Massacre, and the bloodiness of the *French* Leguers, and the Barbarities of High and Low *Germany*, and the late Ferities of *Piedmont*) that the Pope is a very honest Gentleman, that never did any harm.

And for *Knot's infidelity unmasked*, that man that shall take that Book for a solid confutation of Mr. *Chillingworth*, must have lost both Reason and Conscience, (for the loss of one of them will hardly serve turn:) by which you may see the Captain was prepared for a Change, and like soft wax ready to receive the impression. And this is all I shall say concerning the quality of the person, and the manner of his Change: I shall now come to the Dogmatical part.

The first and principal thing will be to consider the force of that Discourse which did the work, which though it be a very silly one, yet it is commensurate to many mens capacities, and meeting with an ignorant, proud or loose Protestant, sometimes is the mean of their perversion.

*The Popish Gentleman asked me (saith my Author) whether I was so certainly and infallibly assured of the Truth of the Christian Religion, that it was not possible for me, or for those who taught me Christianity, to be mistaken therein; and he gave me this Reason for his Question, that otherwise, as to me, Christianity could be no more than probably true; and we could not condemn the Jew, or Turk, or Pagan, since they were as well perswaded of their several wayes, as we could be of ours, upon a fallible certainty, and for ought we know, (not having any infallible certainty for our Christianity) some of them might be in the right, and we in the wrong way, for it is possible you may be mistaken,* pag. 5, 6.

This is that, that did the deed, and this is the shield of *Hercules*, or rather the sword of *Goliath*, by which they sometimes do execution upon an ungrounded or ungodly Protestant, which therefore it will be worth while a little to insist upon.

1. Let it be observed, what rare Champions the Papists are for the Christian cause, and what a singular course they take for the Conversion of Jews, and Turks, and Pagans. For more clearness I shall represent it in a Syllogistical Form: If the Church of *Rome* (i.e. the Pope and a Council) be not infallible, a Jew, or Turk, or Pagan are as well perswaded of their several wayes, as we of ours, (these are the Authors words:) But the Church of *Rome* (whether you mean the Pope or Council or both) is not infallible. This I hope hath been made evident enough from the foregoing Discourse, *Ergo*, a Jew

Jew, or Turk, or Pagan are as well perswaded of their several wayes, as we of ours. A glorious Conclusion! and most true of *Italian* Christians; Turks and Pagans are as well perswaded of their wayes, as they are of Christianity. Nor is it without cause that so many Authors (some of them Popish) complain so much of the swarms of Atheists in the Church of *Rome*; for certainly this is as compendious a way to Atheism as can likely be imagined, to hang the verity of Christianity and the Popes or Councils infallibility upon the same pin; and consequently those learned Papists, who doubtless many of them laugh in their sleeves, to see so credulous and simple a world to believe the latter, can easily shake off the sense of the former.

2. Let us examine a little the strength of this pretty Proposition: That if we be not infallibly assured of the truth of Christianity, Jews and Turks and Pagans are as well perswaded of their wayes as we of ours. What a mad assertion is this, that nothing is credible, but what is infallibly certain, and that there is no difference between probabilities and improbabilities, and yet such Whirl-pools and quick-sands must they needs sink into, that give up themselves to the conduct of Popish guides and principles. I am not infallibly certain, that there is such a place as *Jamaica*, (for it is possible all Geographers may mistake, and all Travellers may lye, unless his Holiness should chance to make a voyage to see:) therefore by this doughty argument, I am as certain, that there is a Sea-passage to *China* by the North. I am not infallibly sure, that the Sun is bigger than a Bushel, (for *Epicurus* thought it no bigger, as *Cicero* informs us:) therefore (it seems) I am as certain, that there is a world in the Moon, or in every Star (as some Philosophers held.) I am not infallibly certain of the existence and achievements of *Alexander* the Great;

Great ; by this argument it will follow, that I am no less sure of the History and adventures of *S. George of England*. What if I be not infallibly sure of the truth of the Christian Religion, may there not be such clear probabilities, and cogent evidence, that none but a mad-man can deny it? What if in a frosty morning I should find two or three verses written upon a glass window, will any man in his right wits doubt, that some man or other writ them? and yet it is not impossible (because it implies no contradiction) that the Frost (which oft times carves out various and curious figures) should some time or other have a lucky hit, and fall into a vein of Poetry. Or what if I see a Calf in a field, will any sober man question whether it came from a Cow, because I am not infallibly certain it did not drop out of the Clouds, as once one did? In like manner, if I be not simply infallible (taking the word in a strict and proper notion) of the Truth of Christian Religion, yet certainly it may suffice against any Turk, or Jew, or Pagan, or Papist either, who in this argument, as in many other things, are contederate with them, whose reason makes him a person fit for Discourse, that there are so great and many and pregnant evidences, that no man can deny without forfeiture of his reason, discretion and modesty, and all the principles of humanity.

3. If this argument be cogent, and besides the *certitudo objecti*, the infallibility of the thing, there be required a *certitudo subiecti*, the infallibility of the person, to be satisfied, (which here is contended for,) then not only the Pope and Council, but every particular Christian must have this gift of infallibility, (an ampliation of the privilege which his great Ghostly Father will never allow,) for mark it, that is the thing which the Catholick Gentleman urged, and wherewith my Captain was gravelled: *He asked me (saith he) whether I was sure and cer-*  
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tain, ---and whether I was so certainly and infallibly assured of the truth of Christian Religion, or else (said he) as to me Christianity was but probably true, else it is possible you may be mistaken: and at this rate do they use to talk to such as they desire to Profelyte. By all which it appears, that the Infallibility must be particular in every individual person, that would be satisfied himself, or would convince another of the Truth of Christianity. I am not ignorant of a shuffling artifice, which this Catholick used in confounding two things together, necessary to be distinguished, (as no wonder to meet with confusion of language in the builders of *Babel*) whilst he ( too cunning for twenty of these Novices ) states the business thus : He asked me (saith my Author) whether I was so certain, ---that it was not possible for me, or for those who taught me Christianity, to be mistaken in this, p. 5. Here lies the mystery of Iniquity, and here was the blind cast before the eyes of this unequal combatant, which he had neither wit enough to understand himself, nor humility enough to learn from others. But I shall endeavour to bring this Fox out of his hole by this Argument : Either a subjective certainty or infallibility of belief of the Truth of Christianity is necessary for particular Christians, or it is not : if it be not necessary, then in vain do Papists urge this argument, and boast so much of it, as unanswerable ; whereas now they give it up, and confess probable evidence sufficient for particular Christians, and Infallibility necessary only for the Pope or Council : and so the poor Captain hath lost his Infallibility, and had best think of his old military word, *As you were*, for here the cord is cut asunder, by which he was drawn over to *Rome*, for now the Protestant stands upon even ground ( at least ) with the Papist. For suppose, for once, contradictions were reconciled, and the Popish opinion of the Churches infallible authority were true in it self *certitudine objecti*,

so also is the Protestants opinion concerning the Infallible authority of the Scripture true in it self, and *certainly objective*, as the most desperate Papists do grant, *Stapleton*, and *Bellarmino*, and all. *The Scripture* (say they) *is Divine, and true, and certain in it self, but not quoad nos*: therefore hitherto there is no difference: now to proceed. If it be a sufficient foundation for a Romanist, that he hath such probable evidence of this doctrine of the Churches Infallibility, why should it not be as sufficient a foundation for a Protestant, that he hath such (nay, infinitely more) probable evidence of the doctrine of the Scriptures infallibility? since the evidence of the latter is granted by the Papists themselves, and the evidence of the former not only denyed and disputed down by the Protestants, but also questioned by their own Authors, as I have shewed at large. This question I challenge the whole club of Jesuites, (which happily contributed to this Epistle) solidly to answer. But now on the other side, if they will retire to the other part of the Dilemma, and say, That a subjective infallibility is necessary for particular Christians, then every Papist in *England* not only hath a Pope in his Belly, but hath got his Crown also upon his head, and communicates with him in that great Prerogative of Infallibility: and truly I must do them justice; without doubt every Papist in *England* is as infallible as the Pope himself.

4. But if nothing will satisfie but infallibility, let us a little enquire into it, what it is, and where it lies, and what infallible and irresistible demonstrations the Romanists have for this grand principle, for which a man must put out the eyes of his reason, and forsake the conduct of the Scripture, and depose the Holy Spirit from his Royalty. Certainly it is madness in the highest to put us off with conjectures, and suppositions, and imagined probabilities in so important an affair, upon which all the rest depends,  
and



and to which all must strike fail: so then, the question will be this, whether this pretence of infallibility be not a *gratis dictum*, a crude and bold assertion, or rather, whether it be evidenced with such strength and clearness, as to compel the assent of all reasonable persons: And here I shall do the Captain and the Popish cause this right, as to consider it in its most advantageous notion. If there be any infallibility, most certain it is, that it is in the Pope and general Council together, which is the most plausible and received opinion of the Church of Rome. And here it is that our English Apostate, Mr. Cressy, in the last Edition of his Book, centers; and here also the Captain casts anchor: *The Prelates of the Church* (saith he) *though as men they are fallible, yet when assembled in a general Council with their Supreme Pastor, they are still made infallible by the assistance of the same Holy Ghost, who was as well promised to them as to the Apostles.*

Now for this notion, I might refer the Captain and the Reader to what I have said and proved in the foregoing Treatise, which when he, or any of his Fathers shall solidly answer, it will be time enough then to consider it. But because this is the sole foundation upon which the Papists build all the rest, and Mr. Cressy adjures all Protestants, that omitting or deferring all particular disputes with Catholics, they would examine this point, *Seck. 2. Chap. 19.* and because I am resolved by Gods help to search and try where the strength of this *Samson* lyes, (if there be any in it) I shall a little farther consider it; and if I find his arguments proportionable to his confidence, and that he is as solid in proving it, as he is daring in asserting it, surely he will do the Christian world an inexpressible favour, and infinitely oblige all Protestants, and he will find us far from the madness of fighting against God and our own souls. But since all is not Gold  
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that glisters, and our Saviour hath commanded us to try the Spirits, and to prove all things, and not to believe men, saying, *Lo here is Christ, or Lo there is Christ*; they must not take it amiss, if, after such evident discovery of their manifold impostures, we dare not take all things upon trust from them, nor swallow down so great a morsel without chewing, and enquiring into it.

It seems to be granted on both sides, and the nature of the thing requires it, That this being a grand principle should have the greatest evidence, which things of that nature can bear: and such indeed they pretend for it. So Mr. Cressy tells us, *That as this controversie was of infinite importance, Providence hath suitably furnished us with means of satisfaction --- infinitely more copious, evident, and powerful, than in any other besides, Exomolog. sect. 2. chap. 18.* And again: *That which I undertake to make evident to I. P. is, that the Church speaking by a general Council, confirmed by the Pope, is an infallible guide, (and that with more evidence than he can produce for the Scripture it self.)* Appendix to his *Exomologesis* chap. 4. num. 9. It is well that saying and doing are two things, or else the Protestant cause had been quite in the dust. If Mr. Cressy make this good; his work is done; if not, it will concern him to remember from whence he is fallen, and repent of his Apostasie. So now we are come to the point, whether the Churches Infallibility be so evidently proved, as they pretend? They affirm, and I deny it: and the grounds of my denial have been a principal part of the foregoing discourse. I shall forbear repetitions, as much as is possible, and shall here only give two Arguments to shew, That this pretended evidence of the doctrine of Infallibility is but one of their *μεγαλορρήματα*, and a piece of their usual artifice, to give us confident affirmations instead of evident proofs.

My first reason is taken from the inevidence of this doctrine

doctrine to themselves, and many of their own Brethren. What a desperate assertion is it, to ascribe greater evidence to the Churches infallibility, ( which is denied by many of their own Authors,) than to the Divinity of the Scripture ? ( whose evidence is so great, that both Protestants and Papists universally acquiesce in it. ) I have already represented the differences and dissatisfactions of their own Authors in this, supposed to be, most evident point. And certainly, it can be nothing but want of evidence, which hinders the assent of those, whose interest so powerfully obligeth them to it. Particularly I have shewed the vanity of that pretence of agreement between their divided Authors in the Infallibility of the Pope and a Council together; and that the several Partisans, howsoever they put them both together in name and shew, yet in truth they ascribe the Infallibility entirely to the one or other, either to the Pope alone, or to the Council alone, and to the other only in dependance thereupon. *Infallibility is not partly in the Pope, and partly in the Council, but wholly in the Pope ( say the Jesuites, ) and from him communicated to the Council, who are infallible no farther than they have his consent and concurrence.* And on the other side, *it is wholly in the Council, and in the Pope only by participation from them, ( say the Gallican Papists, and Anti-Jesuitical party, and of this mind were those Councils that undertook the censuring and removing of Popes themselves. )* And consequently, the Infallibility of Councils not being evident to the Jesuites and their party, and the Infallibility of the Pope not being evident to the French Papists, and many others, it follows, that there is no evidence at all in either, nor in both together, their own Authors being Judges. For if I can prove to a Jesuite, That the Pope *in Cathedrâ* is not infallible, he will (and by his principles must) grant, That the addition of a Council doth not  
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make him infallible. And if I can prove to a French Papist, that a general Council rightly called and constituted is not infallible, he will (and by his principles must) acknowledge the Popes consent cannot render them infallible: so that indeed if either be disproved, both are disproved.

Nor doth any thing render this evidence more dark, and the Romish cause more contemptible, than the consideration of those poor Fig-leaves, wherewith Mr. Cressy seeks to cover his Mothers nakedness in this particular. For when Mr. Chillingworth urged this very argument against their infallible Judge, that themselves were divided about it, who it was, whether Pope or Council, &c. all that Mr. Cressy answers *ad rem*, is this; That these different Authors of theirs are all agreed in that decision of the Council of Trent, *It belongs to the Church to be Judge of the true sense of the Holy Scripture*: an answer so desperate, that it shews that man, who could acquiesce in it, to be, if not a Papist by interest rather than Conscience, yet at least one given up by God to those *strong delusions*, threatned to the Followers of Antichrist *2 Thes. 2.* among whom he hath now listed himself. And doth this indeed end the differences? doth he offer that for an Answer, which his Adversary before had acknowledged? and is this all the relief they have towards the ending of all differences, and the satisfaction of their consciences? When Alexander was asked to whom he would leave his Empire? and he answered, To the best: since he did not at all determine, who this *best* was, I think no man in his wits will say, this was a likely or effectual way to end the differences among the *Grecians*. It is true the Captains were all agreed *in genere*, that it should be left to the best; but some thought one best, others another, and so the dissensions continued among them, and were not at all healed by that general agreement. In the very same manner,

manner, although they be agreed in the general, that the Church must judge, so long as they continue at variance, and have implacable feuds about it who this Church is, they are not one whit nearer agreement. Suppose in former times a question arose between the Senate and Emperour of *Rome*, which was the chief power, and supream Judge of all Civil controversies, and the Subjects of the Empire were highly divided about it, some ascribing the supremacy to the Emperor, others to the Senate: would Mr. *Cressy* say, the *Romans* are agreed, because they were all united in this, That the supream power was to end all their controversies? Suppose three or four Competitors to a Kingdom, and the inhabitants thereof severally divided about them, will any man on this side *Bedlam* say, they are all agreed, because agreed in this general, that the King must rule? or must not every man acknowledge that this agreement signifies but little, so long as they differ about this, which is that King? And is not this the very case of the Church of *Rome*? They are all agreed (forsooth,) not one dissenting voice among them: but how? why they are agreed that the Church is the Judge. But Mr. *Cressy*, the great difference is behind, who is the Church? the Pope, say some, a Council say others, a Pope and Council together say a third sort, (and the several assertors of each opinion confute and destroy the rest,) and *all that hold any of these opinions are universally esteemed good Catholicks*, saith Mr. *Cressy* in his *Append. ch. 4. num. 7.* So they are good Catholicks that dispute down the Popes Infallibility, and they good Catholicks too that dispute down the infallibility of Councils, and (for the reason before mentioned) they good Catholicks, that reject the Infallibility of both together. And therefore 'tis a most impudent position, which Mr. *Cressy* layes down, (and the Papists are obliged to own,) *That the doctrine of the Churches infallibility is so evident,*  
*that*

that the Protestants are inexcusable, and ἀνυπακούετον, that do not receive it: out of thy mouth will God judge thee, O thou unfaithful Servant, who hast thus expressed thy self in another place; To my understanding there is some inhumanity in urging Protestants to more than Catholicks will be obliged to, or to think that to Protestants prepossessed with passion and partiality, that can be made evident, which is so far from being evident to some Catholicks, that they renounce it. Appendix to the Exomologesis, ch. 4. num. 7.

To this might be added, as a farther demonstration of the inevidence of this point even to the Romanists themselves, those secret checks which they meet with from their own consciences in the assertion of this supposed Infallibility, discovered by their haltings, and corrections, and tergiversations, and self-contradictions in explication of this new phenomenon. For however Mr. Cressy mounts this Infallibility so high, that it must not yield to Scripture it self, yet both himself elsewhere, and their other Authors every where are contented with a far lower proportion. Bellarmine (whom Mr. Cressy recites and approves) in his comparison of the Infallibility of the Church and Scripture, gives the preheminance to Scripture in five several respects. See Cressy Sect. 2. ch. 21. *Truth, and our obligation to believe it, is in an higher degree in Scripture, than in the decisions of the Church.* Cressy Appendix chap. 5. n. 2. And this Infallibility of the Church, though they will not suffer us to call it humane and moral, yet they dare not assert it to be Divine, but only after a sort, and in some manner Divine, as the Author of *Laud's Labyrinth* informs us. And this Infallibility they farther confess is not in way of immediate revelation or inspiration from God, but in the way of argumentation and discourse. And here too they are wonderful cautious: for it is acknowledged by Bellarmine and

Stapleton

Seapleton, and Subscribed by Mr. Cressy, *That the Church is fallible in the premises, but infallible in the conclusion.* Cressy, *ubi supra*, and sect. 2. chap. 32. and *Append. chap. 5.* In the decisions of the Church, the simple conclusion decided is only accounted infallibly true, not so the principles upon which it depends, or reasons by which it is proved. Really these Romish Priests are admirable Fellows in all things! Admirable Builders! *Vitruvius* himself might learn Architecture from them, for they can teach him how to build a solid and durable Edifice upon a rotten foundation: Admirable Logicians! *Aristotle* might go to School to them, and learn such Lessons as were above his apprehension; for it is resolved he must blot out his Axioms, *Conclusio sequitur partem debiliorem*, and, *Non debet esse plus in conclusione quam in premissis*, and, *Ex falsis nil nisi falsum*: The Colledge of Jesuites at Rome are ready to make good the contrary against him, when *Plato's* great year shall bring him and them together upon the Stage. Admirable Divines! that have outdone their Lord and Master, and in spite of whatsoever is said by him, *Luke* 6. 43, 44 will, if he please, maintain a dispute with him upon this Thesis, *That a corrupt tree can bring forth good fruit, and that of thorns men may gather Figs, and of a Bramblebush grapes*: and this shall be not only probably defended, but infallibly demonstrated. For it were a silly thing to think, that they that are infallible Divines should be but fallible Disputants. But to return: The inevidence of this notion of the Churches Infallibility may sufficiently appear from Mr. Cressy's own expressions (which have been observed by others) who by the evidence of the truth was forced to this acknowledgment, *That Infallibility is an unfortunate word, that Mr. Chillingworth hath combated it with too great success, so that I could wish (saith he) the word were forgotten, or at least laid by*, whereas all that understand any thing, know, that it

was not the word, but the thing which he combated, and his arguments were not nominal against the Title, but real against the thing it self. It is true, since this passage was published and taken notice of, Mr *Cressy* (having doubtless been severely School'd by his Superiours for such a dangerous passage) is grown more cautious, and hath stretched his wit (and I fear his conscience too) to palliate his assertion, and make an honourable retreat: and he honestly acquaints us with his design, *i. e.* being *crafty to catch the Protestants with guile*, Sect. 2. ch. 21. He that reads the appendix to the second Edition of his *Exomologesis*, will easily discern the trepidations of a guilty conscience, whilst sometimes you shall find him tacitly denying the Churches infallibility properly so called, and contenting himself with great probability in the room of it. At other times you will meet him crying up this infallibility in express or equivalent terms, and in most places having no *salvo* for himself but this; that his assertion, and the Protestants disputation did proceed upon the mistaken notion of infallibility, which the Protestants advanced to an higher pitch than ever the Church of *Rome* did, and so fought against an image that themselves had set up: which is so notorious a falsehood, that if Mr. *Cressy's* wit, and memory, and conscience had not all failed him together, he could hardly have run into it, since all Protestants of any note ever did, and particularly Mr. *Chillingworth* doth dispute against the Churches infallibility, only in that sense and degree which Mr *Cressy* upon maturest advice in this second Edition hath thought fit to express in these words, That *God will preserve his Church in all truth, so as to secure all believers, that she can neither deceive them, nor be deceived her self*. Sect. 2. Chap. 21. Did ever any Protestant, that understood himself, or the point pretend to more? Not Mr. *Chillingworth* I am sure: They all knew and granted, that absolute infallibility



lity was God's prerogative, and neither pretended by the Church of *Rome*, nor was that opinion by Protestants fastned upon them : The only question was, whether God did vouchsafe such infallible guidance to the Church, that she could not erre in her decrees, and decisions ; This Papists affirmed, and Protestants denied : and let me add, that this Infallibility is as high as was ever ascribed to the Prophets or Apostles and Penmen of the Holy Scripture. And although their Infallibility be said to be larger or greater *extensivè*, because in them it reacheth to all sentences, and words, and Arguments, yet the Romanists themselves cannot say it is higher or greater *intensivè*, and the Articles of Faith or conclusive decisions decreed by Councils, are in their opinion as infallible, as the same are when they are laid down in the Scripture. This was the Notion Mr. *Chillingworth* combated against, with so great success as *Cressy* confesseth.

The second Argument to prove the inevidence of this notion of the Churches infallibility, I shall take from the impertinency and feebleness of those crutches or reasons wherewith they endeavour to support it. I observe the sum and strength of what he hath to say in this point is reducible to five heads.

The first and great pretence is this, *Take away infallibility and you destroy all Authority ; all Authority, that is not infallible, is meer Faction and Rebellion, and Authority that reacheth only to the outward appearance, or the purse.* *Cressy Appen. ch. 7. num. 2.* And elsewhere, Infallibility and Authority are in effect all one as applied to the Church, *ibid. c. 5. n. 14.* And the assertions of the Churches Authority which are frequent in the Fathers. Mr. *Cressy* urgeth as if they had been directly levelled at the Churches infallibility, *Exomolog. Sect. 2. chap. 19.* Nay so daring is this man in his Argument, that not contented with his

own pretended satisfaction in it, he will needs obtrude the same opinion upon that Noble Lord *Falkland* (which it is sufficiently known he abhorred) *viz.* that if the *Catholick Churches Authority and infallibility were opposed, all other Churches must expire : The Authority of the English Church would be an airy phantasme, &c. Append. chap. 6. num. 19.*

For Answer, I durst appeal to the conscience of this very man, but that Apostates in the Faith do at the same time make shipwreck of a good conscience, let any Romanist, that is not prodigal of his Damnation, seriously consider the gross falshood of this bold supposition. What, no Authority without infallibility? Belike there is no Authority in the King, because no Infallibility. He will say, Civil Authority is but external; But Ecclesiastical reacheth the conscience, and commands the belief of the inward man: Mr. *Cressy* knew this to be a *gratis dictum*, and justly denied by Protestants, and therefore he should have proved it, but crude suppositions and imperious Dictates do pass among Romanists for solid Demonstrations. Yet again I would ask Mr. *Cressy*, whether the Assembly of the Clergy in *France* have Authority over that Church or no: if he deny it, I refer him to his Brethren there for an Answer: If he grant it, then Authority may be without infallibility. Again, I ask him whether the Pope without a Council have Authority over the Church or no: if he deny it, 'tis at his peril; if he affirm it, then his argument is in great jeopardy: For Protestants are allowed to disbelieve the Popes personal infallibility; And he confesseth (I gave you his own words before) that good Catholics deny it and dispute against it. Yet once more; When general Councils have been called to determine the pretensions of Anti-popes, or to depose usurping Popes, or when they have had differences with the Popes,

I demand whether these Councils had any Authority or no? To say they had none, or that their Authority was but an airy phantasm, I think Mr. Cressy will not dare; and if they had, then either a Council, without the Pope is infallible (which most learned Papists now deny, and if Mr. Cressy be of another mind, let him tell us,) or Authority may be without infallibility.

In a word, that the world may see the complexion of an Apostate's Conscience, This very man will grant, that there is an Authority in the Superiour over his Convent, in every Bishop over his Diocels, in every General over his Order, and a weighty Authority too (as their vassals feel by sad experience) yet I hope these are not infallible, *E.* the more impudent is he that argues from Authority to infallibility.

A second Argument is much of the same complexion, taken from the style and practice of general Councils, which was to propose their Doctrines as infallible Truths, and to command all Christians under the pain of Anathema, and eternal damnation to believe them for such, *That Authority which should speak thus not being infallible, would be guilty of the greatest tyranny and cruelty, and usurpation that ever was in the World.* Append. chap. 4. n. 9.

This hath been fully answered before, and therefore I shall here content my self with these two reflections.

1. The utmost of this Argument (abstracting from the invidious expressions he here clothes it with, that it may have in terroure what it wants in strength) would be no more than this, That general Councils in such a way of proceeding were mistaken, and were liable to error: a proposition, which he knew very well the Protestants did universally own, and I hope well may, since the Jesuites (so great a part and support of the Roman Church)

have and do acknowledge, that General Councils and their Decrees are not infallible untill the Popes consent be added, yet such Councils (as is notoriously known) have used to put their Anathema's to their decrees before the Pope's assent was given: And yet forsooth (if you will believe a man that hath cast away his Faith) this Argument is more evident than we can produce for the Scripture it self (for so he saith, *ibid.*)

2. These Anathema's do not at all prove that such Councils either were or thought themselves infallible. It is true, it is an Argument they thought one of these two things; either that the Doctrine propoted by them was infallibly true (as indeed they did) or that their Authority was infallibly certain (which they never pretended) either of these were a sufficient ground for such Anathema's; and therefore his Argument is infirm, proceeding *à genere ad speciem*, *animal est*, *E. homo*. They owned infallibility, *E.* they owned it in their Authority. Particular pastors have a power to Anathematize, and do so in case of Excommunication of Hereticks: are they therefore infallible? If it be said they do it only in pursuance and execution of the Decrees of Councils: I answer; if such persons (confessedly fallible) may Anathematize them that renounce the Doctrines delivered in Councils, because supposed to be infallibly true, why may not the same persons Anathematize them that renounce the Doctrines expressly deliver'd in Scripture, which all grant to be infallibly true? Again, if we look into the Records of Councils, we shall find that this practice of Anathematizing was not only in use in general, but also in particular and provincial Councils, which are confessed to be fallible: *E.* Mr. Cressy look to your Arguments and conscience better. Once more, the Pope's anathema's all the world rings of, yet you have seen his infallibility is denied by many and learned Papists, and they

they too *such as are universally esteemed good Catholics*, saith Mr. *Cressy* *Append. chap. 4. num. 7.* Therefore how durst he say, Anathema's are evidences of Infallibility?

The third Argument is taken from the promises of infallibility made to this Church. *This doctrine of the Churches infallibility is the most express in Scriptures*, saith Mr *Cressy*, *Sect. 2. chap. 26. n. 5.* I suppose he told us so upon the same account that the old Painter wrote under his picture, This is a Lion, for fear some should have mistaken it for a Bull; for truly if he had not said it was most express there, any rational man would have sworn the contrary.

I confess, I thought Mr *Cressy* (as well as Mr. *White* and other Traditional Doctors) had been sick of those pretences, and sufficiently discovered the impertinency of them to their purpose: and really when I read over the Scriptures quoted by him to prove this infallibility, and consider how insignificant they are to his business, and how plainly, and fully, and frequently they have been answered by Protestants, (which he doth not here reply to) I must not dissemble, that I find a great difficulty to believe his conscience could be satisfied therewith; sure I am, whilst he was a Protestant, (if he understood himself) he would have entertained such proofs with contempt. I dare confidently say, that most of the Scripture allegations produced by the Quakers (in defence of their absurd and ridiculous opinions) are every whit as pertinent as any that are here cited. It is true they are material to that purpose to which they are cited by the Fathers, *viz.* to prove the Churches perpetuity and just Authority; but for infallibility, how far the Fathers were from believing that, I hope hath been made sufficiently evident from the foregoing Discourse, where also particular Answers have been given to their Arguments

ments from these places, which when they solidly vindicate, it will deserve, and (ὅν δεῖ) shall have our consideration. At present I shall content my self with this general animadversion.

Those Scriptural promises pretended for the Churches infallibility, either they do of themselves without the Churches sense and exposition, evidently and solidly prove the point they are brought for, or they do not; if they say they do, then other passages of Scripture (undoubtedly far more plain and positive for diverse Doctrines rejected by the Papists) do of themselves, without the Churches sense and exposition, prove those points they are brought for, and so Scripture may decide controversies: if they say not, then the Churches infallibility must be supposed, before it can be proved from those Texts, which is I confess agreeable to the Roman Catholick way of Disputation, and fit for them that cannot endure reason should be Judge, but I am sure it will never satisfy any man that hath any care of his conscience or Salvation. But I can tell the Reader good News, and that which is strange too among Romanists, who use to confute Protestants by the meer naming of those Texts, that have been substantially vindicated an hundred times, Mr. Cressy hath one Chapter entitled the *Validity of such Texts*, &c. so it is called, but I doubt it was the Printers mistake for *Invalidity*, as will appear upon perusal. He offers but one Argument for proof of this Capital Assertion, upon which all the Papacy depends, and it is this: *The Antient Fathers do usually argue against their Hereticks and Schismaticks from those promises, that Christs Church should continue for ever, and that the gates of Hell should not prevail against her: Now (saith he) if these promises of Christ be not infallible and absolute, and that Church visible, what then? then woe to the poor Fathers, then the Writings of those Fathers will*

will prove to be the most foolish, impertinent, juggling, yea blasphemous and pernicious discourses that ever were. So *Cressy* Sect. 2. chap. 28. that is to say (if we take the notion out of this odious dress) they used fallacious Arguments: Very good! And is this that, that satisfied Mr. *Cressy's* conscience? Oh the modesty of the man! you see a little thing satisfies him; but if he will cheat himself, let him not think to cheat us with such ridiculous Arguments.

1. The utmost of what would follow is, that the Antient Fathers whose Writings are extant were Fallible, and liable to mistakes: A Proposition which I have formerly proved, and the Popish Doctors themselves agree with us therein, I suppose Mr. *Cressy* will not dissent.

2. If upon every impertinent and unconcluding Argument produced by Fathers, Councils, or Popes, against supposed Hereticks, I should make this inference that they were all Juglers, Blasphemers &c. Mr. *Cressy* will now think it a very harsh censure: When their great Lords and Masters argue at this rate (as he knows who did) Arise *Peter* kill and eat, and here are two Swords: Ergo the Pope hath Civil and Spiritual power over all men: They that are in the flesh cannot please God: E. Priests should not be married: God made man after his own Image: E. Images are lawful. Will Mr. *Cressy* now say these were all Juglers, Blasphemers, &c? and their Writings the most foolish, impertinent, pernicious Discourses that ever were? Either then let Mr. *Cressy* qualify his censure there, or apply it here.

3. If the Fathers were supposed infallible, yet they might use impertinent and unconcluding Arguments. You must remember our Masters the Romanists, while they assert the infallibility of the Pope and Council, they cautiously distinguish between the conclusion and the

the mediums or Arguments to prove it : I will only mind you of him whom they all so highly approve and applaud, *i. e.* Stapleton (whom Mr *Cressy* follows and the rest of them) who (as you say) limits the infallibility to the Conclusion, not to the premises or Argument : So if the Fathers were infallible (as you see and the Papists confess they are not) yet this being only in the Conclusion, it will not at all secure them from impertinency and error in their Arguments or mediums used to confirm the conclusions, which is all that this Discourse of Mr. *Cressy* pretends to prove. So now judge, whether the Printer was not a knave (for sure the Author could not be so since he is a *Benedictin*) to set in the front of this Argument, *The Validity, &c.*

But you know *non omnia possumus omnes* : Peradventure Mr *Cressy* is a better respondent than opponent, and though he cannot at all prove his own assertion, yet he will at least solidly Answer his Adversaries. But alas ! here he is so jejune, that it moves my pity ; for when Mr. *Chillingworth* pleaded that these promises were only conditional, if Christians should make use of Gods means -- The Church should continue : Hereto (saith *Cressy*) the answer is very ready. Oh the benefit of a ready wit when attended with an easy Conscience ! 1. *There is no warrant from any circumstance in those Texts for such a new interpretation.*

I will not ingage in that Argument, only I will refer a parallel place to his consideration : It is said particularly concerning Jerusalem (which never was said concerning Rome) *I have hallowed this house--to put my name therein for ever, and mine eyes, and mine heart shall be there perpetually,* 1 Kings 9. 3. And it is again repeated concerning that house, that the Lord had said, *In Jerusalem shall my Name be for ever,* 2 Chron. 33. 4. Then (if he have a conscience) let him Answer, whether there be not



as much warrant from these Texts to prove this promise to *Jerusalem* to be infallible and unconditional, (which they grant it was not) as from the other Texts to prove them to be so to the Church of *Rome*. He need not take day to answer it.

His second answer is wholly *ad hominem*, (and the other you will say was little *ad rem*,) That Mr. *Chillingworth* applies this to future times only, not to past or present, and therefore it concerns not the dispute in hand about the *Roman Catholick Church*, which all *English Protestants* acknowledge to be a true Church of Christ. Just so they would perswade their Proselytes, that all Protestants grant that theirs is a safe way, and Salvation to be had ordinarily in the communion of their Church; whereas neither the one nor the other are true. But what if Protestants do, and Mr. *Chillingworth* did grant their Church to be a true Church, doth it therefore follow, these Texts were pertinently alledged to prove it? or did Mr. *Chillingworth* say, these promises were absolute for time past or present, and conditional only for the future? no such matter: but these are only his own dreams, and shufflings, who (*pro more*) when he cannot answer his Adversary, indeavours to blind his Reader. I have only one thing more to observe upon that (which he tells us Mr. *Chillingworth* saw) That if there were such promises of indefectibility, none could challenge them but the *Roman Church*, since she only claims them, all others lay down their claim. But that also is no more solid than the rest: for since this promise of indefectibility is general and indefinite, it no more belongs to *Rome* than to any other particular Church: neither have they any more interest in the promise, because they boldly claim the Monopoly of it, (since an usurpers claim gives him no just Title to the thing:) Nor have other Churches the less interest in it, because their conscience and modesty will

will not suffer them to appropriate it to themselves, (for though they extend this promise of indefectibility to the whole Church, yet they reap the comfort and benefit of it, in as much as they are true members of that Church, and not upon any local or particular consideration.)

There is a fourth argument behind, taken from the Tradition or testimony of the present Church: but this I have discoursed at large, and I hope discovered the folly of that new device: thither I refer the Reader.

A fifth argument there is, and that is all I find in Mr. *Cressy*, (for I have diligently searched him, and God is my witness I have indeavoured to single out the strongest and most plausible passages in him, which I had not answered before,) and that is taken from the Churches Unity: *One Church there cannot be, without one faith, nor one faith where differences are irreconcilable, and no reconciling of differences, but by an authority, and that infallible. Append. chap. 6. n. 3.* And again: *The Sun shines not more clear (I suppose he means in the Cloysters of his Convent) than that there is no possible Unity without Authority, nor no Christian Unity without an infallible Authority, ch. 7. n. 2.*

*Answ.* Very well; it being premised, That their only infallible Authority is, as Mr. *Cressy* states it, the Church speaking by a general Council, confirmed by the Pope, *Appen. cha. 4. num. 9.* then if this Argument be solid, let Mr. *Cressy* take what follows: Then there was neither one Church nor one Faith, for the first 300 years, when there was no general Council: then when the Pope dies, or his See is vacant other waies (as oft hath been) and when there is no Council (as now there is none) there is no Unity in the Church of *Rome*: what thinks this man of the Gallican Church, which (unless they be thoroughly Jesuited) do still hold (as they used to do) that the Pope, personally considered, is not infallible, but

but only with a general Council : will he justifie it at the Assembly of the French Clergy, that they have in this day no unity among them, and no way to reconcile their differences, because they have no infallible Authority? But I shall not waste my time any longer with these impertinent and mis-called arguments : I shall leave the point with this short *Memorandum*, That it is a plain evidence of the desperateness of their cause, that all the great wit, and vast learning, and deep cunning of the Romish Doctors can furnish them with no better arguments than these. And since this is all that Mr. Cressy can pretend for his Apostasie, I would intreat him in his next to furnish me with some Answers to those that suspect his change was not from conscience, but discontent or passion, or worldly interest, (as affairs then stood :) for I confess I am at a loss, and know not what to say for him; and the rather, because the pretended motives of his Conversion are so ridiculously absurd, and incredible, among which I find two that deserve a special remark. One is the scandalous personal qualities of *Luther* and *Calvin*, which, if all that he saith of them were true and material, (as it is either notoriously false, or inconsiderable,) yet it amounts to nothing against the Protestant cause, since though we own them for eminent persons, and worthy instruments, yet we readily acknowledge, they were lyable to error, and subject to passions and infirmities, no less than other men, nor did we ever make them the Pillars and grounds of the Gospel, or the foundation and rule of our Faith. But that this should occasion his Change, I confess is beyond the faith of Miracles to believe. This is prodigious, That the supposed mistakes or miscarriages of two particular Protestant Doctors should really have greater influence to turn him from the Protestant Religion, than the real Blasphemies, and abominable filthinesses of their Masters and Pillars

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of their Faith and Church, *viz.* the Popes, should have to alienate him from the Popish Religion; and these things not feigned by Adversaries, (as most of their Calumnies against *Luther* and *Calvin* re) but acknowledged by their own Authors, who have left us a particular account of the several sorts of their villanies: so many blasphemers, as *John* 13. *Julius* 3. &c. so many Hereticks, as *Boniface* 8. *John* 23. so many Conjurers, as *Sylvester* the second, and his Successors for many Successions; so many whoremongers, so many Sodomites, Poisoners, Incestuous, and what not? 150 Popes (saith *Genebrard*) rather Apostatical than Apostolical persons. And yet this tender conscientious men, who knew all these things, and could bear with all this, and a thousand more such infirmities in the Popes, was so squeamish that he was not able to endure the scandals of *Luther* and *Calvin*. And another motive he adds, not at all inferior to the former, *viz.* The bloody commotions of the *Calvinists*, and the sanguinary Laws and cruel execution of them upon Catholick Priests in England: And this was a great offence to him, who was well acquainted with the Massacres of *France*, of *Germany*, and the Low Countries, and the *English* too in Popish times, who knew the History of the barbarous cruelties of the Inquisition torments, who himself had been an eye and ear witness of the inhumane butcheries of above one hundred thousand innocent Protestants in *Ireland*. But all this did not move the good man at all: he could swallow Camels, but a Gnat hath choaked him. O Devilish Hypocrisy! But God will not be mocked, and I hope men that have any sense will not easily be deceived to believe the sincerity of that mans Conversion, which is brought on by ridiculous Motives. But to return.

For a close of this great point, I shall leave three things to the consideration of any discreet and conscientious

ous Reader, and particularly of our two *English* Apostles, with whom I am now treating, if they have any sense of Eternity or Conscience left.

1. That the principal Texts of Scripture, and argument urged by them and others for the Infallibility of the Pope and Council together, either prove nothing to their purpose, or prove more than they would have or dare assert, *i. e.* they prove either the Pope or Council to be infallible by themselves, and without any reference to the other, and are accordingly pleaded by each party for their opinion. As for instance: *Thou art Peter, upon this rock &c. I will give unto thee the keys &c. And Simon -- I have prayed, that thy Faith fail not:* and the like. If these Texts prove any Infallibility, they prove the infallibility of the Pope, or St. Peter's Successor, whether with or without a Council. So on the other side, the Texts of Scripture pleaded for the Infallibility of Councils from what was said to or of all the Apostles: *He that heareth you heareth me. It seemed good to the holy Ghost and us. Where two or three are gathered together, I am with you to the end of the world:* If these Texts prove any Infallibility, they prove the Infallibility of all the Governours of the Church and Successors of the Apostles, at least when they are assembled together, without any special reference to the Pope, who is but one of them. And because it is sufficiently evident, that these places do not prove the infallibility of those, of whom they are acknowledged primarily and formally to speak, (which is so evident, that we have thousands of the most learned and resolved Papists consenting to us herein, as is before proved) it is therefore a strange presumption to pretend these places cogent proofs of the infallibility of them, of whom these Texts are confessed not to speak save only by implication: and consequently the infallibility of Pope and Council together, (which is the chief retreat of the most subtle

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tile and cautious Papists) is destitute of solid proof, and an ungrounded assertion.

2. If all that these men say were granted, that a general Council confirmed by the Pope were the infallible Judge, yet since there is now no such thing, (nor like to be,) as a general Council in the Church of *Rome*, but the Pope stands upon his own legs, therefore the Church of *Rome* at this day is not infallible, and hath no infallible Judge, and no way to end their Controversies, nor any advantage above Protestants therein. If they say, the Pope hath the assistance and concurrence of general Councils in their writings and decrees, I answer: The infallible Judge, which they plead for, must according to their principles be a living Judge, and therefore requires the existence of the Council, as well as of the Pope. I would ask Mr. *Cressy* this question: Is the Pope infallible in his exposition and application of the Decrees of Councils, or no? if he be, then the Pope alone is infallible without a Council (which himself confesseth is a proposition so harsh, that Protestants should not be urged to acknowledge it.) If he be not, then they have no infallible Judge at *Rome* at this time, *οτι ουδεις δεξται.*

3. Since the Present Romanists have now no Anchorhold but the Popes Infallibility, (for general Council there is none,) and by Mr. *Cressy's* argument, if there be no Infallibility, there is no Authority, and therefore no Unity, and therefore no Faith: I shall desire the Reader to reflect upon the character of that person, who is so boldly asserted the Supreme infallible Judge of all controversies in Religion: I will not take it from Protestants (lest they should be thought partial,) but as it is drawn by a Papist, & he too one *non è multis*, one so eminent for learning and prudence, and trustiness, that he was employed by the French Bishops to manage that great affair against the Jesuites at *Rome*: it is St. *Amour*, in that famous & known

known book, his Journal concerning the Transactions at Rome, relating to the five propositions controverted between the *Molinists* and *Jansenists*, where it is left upon Record *in perpetuam rei memoriam*, That when he solicited the Pope (*Innocent the Tenth*) to decide that controversy, and to that end presented a paper to him, desiring him to read it, the Pope (saith my Author) would not receive and read it, because he said this would engage him further, and oblige him to too great toils, as he knew the discussion of this matter required, even of such as had applied themselves to that study all their time, but much more pains must it cost him than others, because (saith he, they are the Popes own words) it is not my profession, besides that I am old, I have never studied Divinity: Part. 3. chap. 12. And yet this is the ground and pillar of Truth, this is the prime subject of infallibility, the great judge of all controversies, (to whom Scripture, Reason, Spirit, all must vail,) whose Decisions must be taken for the Oracles of God. And the same Pope *Innocent the Tenth* tells this story of a predecessor of his, *Clement the 8.* Who (saith he) after he had caused this matter (viz. the question between the *Jansenists* and *Jesuites*) to be debated in his presence for a long time by the most excellent men, after he had studied them himself with very great care, so that as he remembered some took occasion thereby to say, that *Clement the 8* beg in very old to study Divinity, yet he could not at last decide any thing therein, but was faine to impose a perpetual silence upon both sides. This is the man that must infallibly decide all controversies, that could not decide this, and we (fortho) must all ventare our souls upon his unerring guidance, that is not convinced of it himself, and our Papists most impudently assert the Popes infallibility, who modestly acknowledged his own ignorance and insufficiency. These things I hope may abundantly suffice for the demolishing of the grounds of their Faith, I must

now speak something to the establishing of ours. The rather, because the Captain requires it in his Answerer, not to proceed in the way of Negatives, not to rest in pulling down, but to assert what we should establish. And Mr. *Cressy* takes notice of Mr. *Chillingworth* and his book, that he was better in pulling down buildings, than raising new ones, and that he hath managed his Sword much more dexterously than his Buckler; and that Protestants do neither own and defend the positive grounds which *Chillingworth* laid, nor provide themselves of any safer defence. *Exomolog. sect. 2. chap. 3. num. 4.*

To which it might suffice in general to reply, that if once the grounds of their Faith be demolished, and their great pretensions of supreme and infallible Authority subverted; if it be proved, that neither the Pope, nor Councils, nor Church of *Rome* be infallible, then the Protestant Churches at least stand upon even ground with the Church of *Rome*, and whatsoever they can reasonably pretend for the establishing of their Faith, will tend to the securing of ours; and if Protestants have no solid and sufficient Foundation for their Belief, neither have the Papists any better; and then one of these two things will follow: either that Scripture, Reason, and the concurring testimony of former Ages, and Churches, and Fathers are a firm Basis for a Christians Faith independent upon the Churches Authority, and infallibility, (and this is a certain truth, though utterly destructive to the Church of *Rome*,) or else, (which I tremble to speak, and yet these desperate persons are not afraid to assert) that the Christian Faith hath no solid ground to rest upon, (I mean, without the Churches infallible Authority, which is now supposed to be discarded and disproved.) Now here it must be confessed, that some Protestants express themselves too unwarily in the point, whereby they give the Adversary some seeming advantage and occasion



occasion to represent our Doctrine to their ignorant and deluded Profelytes, as diversified into three or four several and contrary opinions, about the judge and rule of Faith, which some are said to ascribe to the Scriptures, others to the spirit of God within them, others to reason, and others to universal Tradition, whereas indeed all these are really agreed, and these are not so many several Judges or Rules, but all in their places and orders do happily correspond to the constitution of the Protestant ground of Faith, which I shall make thus appear by the help of a threefold distinction.

1. We must distinguish between the Judge and Rule of Faith, which the Papists cunningly and some others inconsiderately confound. For instance, if I should assert the Church to be Judge, or Reason to be the Judge, yet the Scripture is the Rule, to which the Judge is tyed, and from which if it swerve, so far forth its sentence is null.

2. We must distinguish between Judge and Judge, and here we must take notice of a triple Judge according to the triple Court, *forum cæli, forum Ecclesiæ, forum Conscientiæ*, the Court of Heaven, the Court of the Church, and the Court of Conscience. Accordingly there are three Judges.

1. The supreme and truly infallible Judge of all controversies, and that is God and Christ, who appropriates it to himself to be the *alone Law-giver*, *Jam. 4. 12.* And this is so proper to God, that the blessed Apostles durst not ascribe it to themselves, (however their Successors are grown more hardy) *not for that we have dominion over your Faith, 2 Cor. 1. 24.* This Judge is Lord over all, both in the Church and in the Conscience, which are all subordinate to him.

2. There is an external and political Judge, placed by God in the Church, and these are the Governours

whom Christ hath placed in and over the Church: and these are subordinate to the Supreme Judge, who if they really contradict his sovereign sentence and higher Authority, and require things evidently contrary to the will of their and our Master, must give their subjects leave to argue with the Apostle *Peter* ( and I tell you it was an unhappy accident that St. *Peter* should furnish the Protestants with such an Argument as would puzzle all his Successors to answer,) *Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God judge ye, Acts 4. 19.*

3. There is an internal and secret Judge, placed by God in every particular person, and that you may call Reason or Conscience; for as God hath made every man a reasonable creature, and capable to judge of his own actions, so he hath not given that faculty (no more than the rest) to be for ever suspended, and wrapt in a napkin, but to be duly exercised, nor would he have men like brut beasts that have no understanding; but every where he calls upon them to judge: *I speak to wise men, judge ye what I say, 1 Cor. 10. 15.* And the service God requires of every man must be λογική λατρεία *reasonable service, Rom. 12. 1.* And every man must be ready and able to give a reason of the hope that is in him, *1 Pet. 3. 15.*

4. We must distinguish between an instrument and an argument. And here lies the golden mean, by which a man may avoid those contrary Heresies both equidistant from the Truth, I mean the Socinian on the one hand, and the Papist on the other, whereof the former would make reason a sovereign universal judge to which even Scripture it self must vail: And some go so high, that I remember one of them saith, *If the Scripture should say in express terms, that Christ is the most high God, I should not believe it (because utterly repugnant*

repugnant to reason) but seek some other sence of those words. And the latter (the Romanists) would quite put reason out of office, and *in terminis* submit to a blind or implicate obedience without any examination, whereas the truth lies between both. Reason or Conscience is not an argument, ( I mean in matters of Faith purely such,) that is, I do not therefore believe such a Doctrine of Faith to be true, because my reason or conscience in it self, and by virtue of rational and extrascriptural Arguments tells me it is true (for this were to make my Reason the rule and standard of truth) but my reason or conscience believe such a thing to be true, because it reads or hears such Arguments and evidences from the Scripture as are the undoubted *τεκμήρια* of the Truth. And thus reason is the instrument, by which I apprehend the Argument which compels my belief. So again, the Spirit of God, (as in this controversie it is taken for the gifts or graces of a believing Soul) or its ordinary suggestions in my mind, are not the argument by which I am convinced of the Truth of a Doctrine, (for I may be deceived by a false spirit under the Title of God's, and I am commanded to try the Spirits, and not to believe every Spirit) but the instrument (as I may so speak) by which I am enabled to understand the weight and force of those Arguments which are recorded (suppose) in the Scriptures, or rather, to speak more properly, reason is the instrument, and God's Spirit is the great Helper and Assistant by which that instrument is elevated and fitted to discern those lineaments of Truth which God hath drawn in Scripture or elsewhere, whence alone the Arguments for proof of the Truth are derived. So now the state of the question is reduced to a narrow compass, and I shall lay it down in these Propositions.

1. Supreme and infallible judge upon earth we know none, and I hope from what hath been said and proved

at large it appears that there is none, at least the Pope, and Council, and Church of *Rome* is none.

2. An external political judge in the Church we willingly acknowledge and reverently esteem, the true and rightful Governours of the Church orderly assembled, and proceeding regularly in Councils (whether lesser or larger) are the external judge, whose decisions are to be highly valued, whose orders are not rashly to be despised or contradicted, yet three Cautions we must interpose. 1. That this Judge is not infallible, but subject to error. 2. That this Judge being subject to an higher Authority, and tied to an higher rule, if its decisions or commands be manifestly repugnant to that superior authority and rule, they are not to be received and obeyed. 3. That this Judge is constituted by God in the Church, not for the command of mens consciences, but for the regulation of their actions, and for the preservation of the peace of the Church, which is not violated by mens inward and unknown sentiments, but by their external demeanour and sensible effects of them: And therefore this is abundantly sufficient for the preservation of order and peace in the Church.

3. Every mans own reason and conscience is judge for himself, and for the guidance of his own actions. State it in this manner, and I know no hurt at all in making reason a Judge: Christ himself, when he preached in the World, he propounds the articles of Faith to the reasons of his hearers, and calls upon every one of them to judge (so far as concerned his own apprehensions or actions,) *Luk. 12. 57. Yea, and why even of your selves judge you not what is right?* Christ no where commands his hearers blindly to submit to the decrees of the present judge their Church, the high priest and Council, but calls upon them to judge for themselves, to beware of the Leaven, *i. e. the false Doctrine of their Rulers, Math. 16. 12.*  
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and (which is more) refers his own doctrine to their searching, which is an act of reason, *John 5. 39. Search the Scriptures.* But alas this reason is imperfect, and corrupt, and dim-sighted in matters of Faith, therefore something farther is necessary. Therefore

*Prop. 4.* That reason may be a competent Judge of matters of Faith, it is necessary that it be assisted and elevated by the spirit of God, whereby of a rational he is made a spiritual man, and *eo nomine* a fit judge of such affairs, *1 Cor. 2. 15. He that is spiritual, judgeth all things.* And that a man may exactly see those Heavenly bodies, which are at a great distance from us, it is necessary to look upon them through a Glass, without which a man could not discern many of them: So are the aids of Gods spirit to help our purblind reason, which without these could not discern things afar off, according to *2 Pet. 1. 9.*

*Prop. 5.* The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the infallible rule, and ground, and touchstone of Faith, by which, both Churches and all particular persons are to be regulated in their Faith and manners, from which all controversies of Faith are to be decided and judged, to which all are perfectly subordinate, by which all the opinions of men and decisions of Councils are to be examined, and they that swerve from and are opposite to this rule, are *ipso facto* null and void, and so to be esteemed by all Christians. I rather call it a rule than a judge, because there is an *ἀκυελογία* in the word, the appellation of judge by common use being appropriated to persons, but it is the voice and writing of our Sovereign Lord and judge, by which all inferiour judges are to be guided in their decrees.

*Propos. 6.* Universal Tradition rightly understood (*viz.* the concurring testimony of all Churches, and ages, and persons in their Writings left us) is of great use and

force, and is the *vehiculum* or Channel, by which the Scripture, (which alone is our rule) is conveyed to us. But here I must add these two Cautions.

1. Tradition, though necessary to convey the rule to us, yet it is no part of the rule. I must here distinguish between *res tradita* the thing delivered, and *traditio* the Tradition or delivery of it: If Tradition be understood in the former sense (as the Papists understand it) for certain unscriptural Doctrines delivered by Tradition, we know no such thing, and by comparing the boldness of their pretensions to such Tradition, with the weakness of their proofs and evidences, we plainly discern they can make out no such thing: But if Tradition be taken for the conveyance or delivery it self, or for the Testimony of the Church successively given to the Truths and Books of the Scripture, we confess it is of great use and in some sort necessary to bring the Rule to us, yet (as I say) it is no part of the Rule. As that bread which nourisheth me, it is necessary that it be brought to me in some Basket or other *vehiculum*, yet it is the Bread alone, not the Basket which nourisheth me. The Water of such a remote but excellent spring, which quencheth my thirst, could not come to me, if there were not a channel to convey it, yet it is the Water alone which refresheth me, not the Channel. The Decrees or Acts of Kings and Parliament are the only Rule by which our foreign Plantations are governed, and to which such as are judges there are tyed (yea so far tyed, that if those Judges should impose contrary commands, as for example, if they should command the people to rebel against the King, they are bound not only to examine their commands, but to disobey them) But it is altogether necessary that there should be a ship, wherein such Acts or Decrees should be conveyed to them; yet it were a very absurd thing to say the ship is a part of the rule, though the  
Papists

Papists (whilst from the necessity of Tradition they infer that it is a part of the rule) do apparently run into the same solecism. In a word, Tradition was not appointed by Christ as a part of that ground upon which we were to build our rule, by which we were to try particular Doctrines and Articles of Faith, but was necessary, not *ex instituto Christi*, but *ex natura rei*, and from the condition of humane affairs, there being no other way (without a new revelation) possible or imaginable to convey the Gospel and Scriptures to those that were to live so many hundred years after the first publication of it: Tradition being to us, that which Eyes and Ears were to them that were Eye-witnesses of his convincing miracles, and Ear-witnesses of his irrefragable discourses, that is, neither their Eyes and Ears were, nor to us Tradition is the Argument and ground of our Faith, but a necessary means or instrument to convey those Arguments and grounds of Scripture which were convincing and satisfactory.

2. This Tradition is no Act of Authority, but only of testimony, not at all peculiar to the Church or general Councils, but common to all antient Writers: Yea let it be observed as a very material consideration in this point, so far is the Capacity of a Church from being necessary to the validity of this Tradition and Testimony, concerning the great rule of our Faith the Holy Scriptures, that the Testimony and Tradition of such as neither are the Church nor any part of it, but enemies to it (I mean Jews and Heathens) are in some respects more considerable, according to that known maxime--*Testimonium adversarii contra se est validissimum*. It being one of the best Arguments (and at this day so urged both by Protestants and Papists) for the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and particularly of the Gospel, that the truth of those Historical relations of Christs miracles was acknowledged

knowledge by the most Learned Jews and Heathens that lived in antient times. And by those considerations we may discern the vanity of that trivial calumny of the great differences among Protestants about the rule of Faith and judge of Controversies, whereas by what hath been said (which is no other than the common Doctrine of the Protestant Churches and Writers, however sometimes they seem to differ in *modo explicandi*) it appears how all these several things concur like so many Stones fitly compacted together to make up the building of our Faith; which (that I may in few words present it to the Readers review) is this :

The Scripture is the Object, the only rule and standard of Faith, by which all controversies of Faith are to be decided and judged, the *res credita*, and the *ratio credendi*. Tradition is the Vehicle to convey this rule to us and our times: Reason is the instrument by which I apprehend, or the eye by which I discern or see this rule: The spirit of God is the Eye-salve that anoints mine Eye, and enables it to see this rule: The Church is the interpreter (though not infallible and authentick,) the witness, the guardian of this rule, and the applier of the general rules of Scripture to particular cases, and times, and circumstances.

And things being thus stated (which is really the sense of Protestants in this great point, as it were easie to shew from the confessions of our Churches and the Treatises of our most and choicest Authors) it is not at all difficult to blow away with a breath those pitiful cavils, whereby they endeavour to perplex the mind of ignorant or prejudiced persons, lest the light of the Gospel should shine into their minds. One thing is worth our Observation, That diverse of the Popish arguments do wholly arise from, and depend upon, either some incommodious expressions of some Protestant Writers, or  
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some false exposition put upon them by the Adversaries; As for instance, when they argue against the Scripture from the nature of a Judge, that a Judge must hear parties, must not be mute, but pass sentence, &c. All these, and many such cavillations are thus silenced by saying that which is true, that it is an *εὐαγγελία* and figurative expression when we call Scripture a Judge, inasmuch as it is the voice or writing of our Judge, and indeed it is a rule: So their Arguments against the judgement of reason, either have no weight in them at all, or else depend upon a scandalous and untrue suggestion, as if the Protestants made reason the Judge in a Socinian sense: So their Arguments against the Spirits being Judge do proceed, I doubt, from a wilful mistake, (for in their Learned Writers it cannot be ignorance) as if the Protestants submitted Scripture and reason and all to the judgement of the Spirit in themselves in an Enthusiastick notion, which is so far from being true, that they try and judge of the Spirit by the Word according to Apostolical prescription. This being premised, I come now to treat with my Captain, and weigh his Arguments that have any colour or appearance of truth in them.

And first he argues against Reasons being the judge of Controversies; concerning which let me be bold to say thus much, That the Papists themselves do make reason judge of Controversies as far as the Protestants do, though both the one and other tie up this Judge to a rule. If it be said the Protestants make the reason of every particular man judge, (which indeed they do, in the sense forementioned and for their own actions) so do the Papists make the reason of the Pope or a Council the Judge; For when they say the Pope or Council is the judge of Controversies, I would know what it is in them, if not their reason which is the judge; as it is their reason which examineth, and heareth, and considereth,

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so sure it is the same reason which concludeth and judgeth, so that the question between the Papists and Protestants is not whether Reason be the judge, but whether the reason of particular persons, or the reason of the Pope or Council.

The Arguments which he urgeth against the judgment of reason are so irrational that it is sufficient confutation to mention them.

1. (*Saith he*) Reason must submit to the Judge, *E.* it is not the Judge. *Answ.* It is true, supreme Judge it is not, but subordinate and tied to rule: Protestants assert **no more.**

2. The Judge must be Infallible; but reason is Fallible, *Ergo.* *Answ.* The Major is a pitiful *petitio principii*, They that help'd him to make his Book will tell him what it means.

3. If reason were Judge, a man might please God without Faith, for reason would teach us sufficiently **how to please God.** *Answ.* The same Argument will overthrow his Church: If the Church be the Judge, then a man may please God without faith, for the Church teacheth us sufficiently how to please God.

4. If Reason be Judge, we must not believe what we do not understand.

*Answ.* *Non sequitur*, For this Judge is tyed up to a Law and Rule which commands us to believe what we do not understand.

But I am sick of such woful Arguments, though the poor Captain hath no better, and therefore I will quit that work and come to that which is more material, *viz.* To try whether he hath any better against the Scripture: And here also I shall do his cause that right as with him to take into consideration what is said by Mr. *Cressy* in his *Exomologesis*, which I am the more willing to do, because if the Popish cause have any strength in it, and if the  
Doctrines

Doctrine of the Scripture alone being Judge and rule of Controversies be untrue and indefensible (as they pretend it is) we may expect the demonstration of it from a man of his wit and learning and experience in the Controversie, as having thoroughly considered all pretensions and arguments of both parties, and taken in the advice of the most famed Doctors of the Romish Church. But I must not dissemble that I was wofully disappointed in the perusal of Mr. Cressy's piece, and whereas I expected something solid and substantial, or at least very plausible, which I might have some ground in charity to believe might give at least a colour for his change, I find little in him worthy of consideration, but what hath already received satisfactory Answers: Yet because the cause affords no better Arguments, I shall briefly consider what he and the Captain and his assistants deliver in this matter.

That the Scripture is not the only rule of Faith and Judge of Controversies, is the Proposition they attempt to prove, and their arguments are those which follow.

*Arg. 1.* Scripture cannot be this Judge and Rule, because it doth not answer its end, for they that own this Judge disagree among themselves, Everard. Epist. pag. 33. *Scripture doth not reconcile them. Thus Cressy, by this rule it is impossible that ever Controversies should be ended. Sect. 2. chap. 4. n. 1.*

*Answ.* Scripture might be (as really it was) designed, instituted and ordained for the ruling of mens Faith and the judging and deciding Controversies, though through the depravedness of men this end might not be obtained: If this Argument have any weight in it, I may upon the same ground argue thus: Preaching of the Gospel was not instituted for the salvation of the World, because it doth not answer its end, but proves to many a favour  
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of death. Or the Law of God was not instituted by God for a rule of Life, because it doth not obtain its end, and men will not be ruled by it. In a word, let it be observed, if this Argument prove any thing, it proves what the very Papists deny, that the Scripture is not so much as part of the rule, neither of Faith nor manners, for still according to the present Argument it doth not Answer its end, for there is no one controversie in Faith, which Scripture alone decides so as to silence all differences, which is the thing pretended necessary to a Judge of Controversies. For the further discovery of the imperinency and vanity of this Argument, however it is their *Goliath* which they most boast of, I shall offer them this *Dilemma* relating to that power of ending all differences among Christians, which they suppose was necessary for, and by Christ committed to the Judge of controversies. Either (I say) that power is absolute, unconditional and effectual, and if so, there could be no Heresies, Schisms, or differences in the Christian World, which we see is most false; or it is a conditional power sufficient of it self for the ending of difference, though frustable and impedible in its effects by the ignorance or perverseness of men (which is the real truth.) And in this sence the Scripture may be judge, *i. e.* there is enough in it said and clearly delivered, by which all controversies might be ended, if men would be humble, studious, and self-denying: and in the former sence the Church of *Rome* is no judge of Controversies. Peradventure it will be said that all men are bound to submit and hearken to all the decrees of the Church of *Rome*, and when they do so submit, it is an effectual means to end all differences: In the very same manner and upon far better grounds I say of the Scripture, that all are bound to submit and hearken to all its Counsels and decrees, and when they do so, it will effectually end all Controversies.

verfies. If it be further faid, that the Church hath a power of coercion to compel dissenters to fubmit: I anfwer, either that coercion they fpeak of is fpiritual by Church cenfures and excommunication, &c. or civil by corporal penalties, death, &c. If they underftand it of civil coercion that is not at all neceffary nor intrinfecal to an Ecclefiaftical judge of controverfies, otherwife the Apoftles (who had not this civil power) nay Chrift himfelf (who denies that he was judge or ruler) fhould not be fuch a Judge, and the Church for the firft 300 years had no judge of Controverfies: Nay, the Papifts themfelves in pretence at leaft abjudicate this from the Church, and refer it wholly to the civil power. If they fpeak of a fpiritual coercion, then the Scripture hath fuch a power of inflicting fpiritual penalties upon its violaters & contemners, fuch as obduration, and ejection from the prefence of God, and fuch excommunication as the other is but a fhadow of it: And whether they fpeak of one or other, the Proteftant Judge of controverfies is not deftitute of either advantage: If it be remembred that the Proteftants own an Ecclefiaftical Political Judge, which Judge although their modefty will not fuffer them to pretend to Infallibility, and a power to oblige all people to receive all their decrees though anti-fcriptural without enquiry; and though they fay with the Apoftle, they have their power for edification, not for defftruction. 2 Cor. 13. 10. and they can do nothing againft the Truth but for the Truth, and though it is their advice to their people, which was the counfel of the Apoftle to his people, 1 Cor. 11. 1. *Be followers of me even as I alfo am of Chrift:* Yet they have a power to explain and maintain the Doctrines of the Scripture, and they acknowledge a power in the Magiftrate by civil fanktions and penalties to fuppreff and reffrain fuch as fhall corrupt the Truth and infect peoples fouls with the poyfon of Heretical Doctrines.

Doctrines. And this may abundantly serve for Answer to their *Achilles* or principal argument which makes such a noise in the world.

*Arg. 2.* Scripture cannot be a perfect rule, because some books of Scripture are lost, and it is the whole Scripture which is this rule.

*Ans. 1.* Then Tradition also cannot be a rule, for diverse Traditions are lost as *Cressy* confelleth, *Sect. 1. Ch. 8. n. 5.* and all the Papists acknowledge.

*Ans. 2.* It doth not at all appear that any one of those Books are lost which concerned controversies of Faith, or the rule of Life; All which to this day hath been proved is this, That some Books written by Holy men and Prophets are lost: But it is a vain imagination, without the shadow of a proof, that all which was written by such men was a part of Canonical or Divine Scripture, for we read that the *Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*, which inspired them not at all times, but only when he pleased, there being this difference between the spirits inspiration of Christ and all other Holy men, that it was in Christ without measure, and without difference of time, but in the Apostles it was a gift, confined to such seasons and proportions as God saw fit for them. Is any man so absurd as to think that every letter which a Prophet or Apostle might write about any private affairs was a part of the Sacred Scripture? Or if *Solomons Herbal* were extant, must it needs be admitted into the Canon of the Sacred Scripture? Or how can they prove ( and if they do not prove it, this argument is impertinent ) that the Histories which *Joshua*, or *Nathan*, or *Samuel*, or *Gad*, &c. might or did write concerning the Wars of the Lord, or the Civil transactions of the Kingdomes of *Israel* and *Judah* must needs be a part of the Canon? Or did the temporary transient and extraordinary inspirations of  
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the Holy Ghost deprive them of their common gifts and faculties? And was the capacity of a Prophet inconsistent with that of an Historian? or because *Balaam* was once inspired, must we needs Canonize all that afterwards he spake, if it were extant? or because *Hannah* was once inspired, 1 *Sam.* 2. and *Simeon*, and *Elizabeth*, Luk. 1. did ever any man, unless in a dream, imagine that all their after-discourses were Canonical?

*Answer.* 3. Although *fragmenta auris sunt pretiosa*, the least threads of Scripture are of inestimable value, yet we must distinguish between the essential, and integral parts of the rule of Faith; every part and parcel of it is a choice blessing for our *bene esse* and more abundant direction and consolation, yet it is not an essential part of the rule of Faith, for the far greatest part of those sacred Books is spent in the explication of such general Laws and directions as were of themselves sufficient *strictè loquendo*, or the repetition of the same things, which mans dulness and backwardness to such things made highly expedient and beneficial. The five Books of *Moses* were sufficient to Salvation before any of the other Books were indited, and the following Writings of the Prophets, were but Comments upon them, which if by God's Providence they had been lost, no doubt the five first Books would have been sufficient for Salvation for that state of the Church. So when St. *Matthew* had written his Gospel wherein the doctrine of the person and office and works of Christ (who is the marrow of both Testaments, and the sole sufficient object of saving knowledge *John* 17. 3.) is clearly revealed and fully proved, I do assert (and let any of our Adversaries prove the contrary if they can) that that had been sufficient for our Salvation. And yet it must be acknowledged a wonderful favour from God that he hath so plentifully provided for us, and so carefully watched by his Provi-

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dence for the preservation of the several books of Scripture, that all the wit and learning of Adversaries can only furnish them with two instances of Apostolical writings which they suppose to be lost, *viz.* one Epistle from *Laodicea*, and another to the Corinthians.

*Arg. 3.* A rule must be plain and clear, but the Scriptures are dark and doubtful, and that in things appertaining to salvation, as appears from *2 Pet. 3. 16. --- things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest to their destruction.* Now this could not bring destruction, if they were not hard in things appertaining to salvation. And here the Captain musters up several necessary Doctrines which he supposeth not to be clearly laid down in Scripture.

*Answ.* The Scripture is plain and clear in things necessary to Salvation, as hath been abundantly evinced by Protestants out of express Scripture, and consent of Fathers; But that belongs to another point, and I do not love to mingle distinct Questions together, therefore to them I shall refer the Reader, only I shall take notice of such assaults as he hath made upon this Doctrine.

For the Text *2 Pet. 3. 16.* I do confess I do not meet with any passage so plausible as this in his whole Book: But the solution of the doubt is not difficult, if you consider, 1. To whom these things are said to be dark, even to ignorant, unstable, ungodly men. When Protestants say Scripture is clear, they do not mean it is so to those that are blind, or to them that shut their eyes, or have discoloured eyes, ( and such are they of whom those things are said ) but unto such as are humble, and diligent in the use of means to find out the Truth; not only some passages of *St. Paul* but in general *all* Divine and spiritual Truths are dark to the natural man ( and such there is no reason to doubt these were ) as is positively



tively asserted by the Apostle *S. Paul*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned: and consequently,* if the Popish argument from this place have any force in it, not only some parts of Scripture will be dark, but not any part of it will be plain, which the most impudent Papists durst never yet assert. 2. The wresting of the Scripture in any of its truths or doctrines is so great a sin, that it may well be called destructive, though the doctrine wrested be not simply necessary to salvation: as the disbelief and contempt of any Truth or assertion plainly delivered by God, is confessed to be damnable, though the matter of the assertion be merely circumstantial, and not at all in it self necessary to salvation.

3. *St. Paul's* *doctrines*, or difficult passages, might be wrested to destruction, although the matter of them was not necessary to be known, or understood in order to Salvation. As for instance: That passage of *S. Pauls*, *All things are lawful for me*, (*scil.* all indifferent things; for he there speaks of the use of meats, or observation of days,) This I say is not a fundamental Truth, nor is the knowledge of it necessary to Salvation, yet when the Libertines do abuse this Scripture, to justify themselves in the practice of all wickedness, doubtless they wrest the Scripture to their own destruction. Besides, the matter of a Text may be of lesser importance, and the knowledge thereof not necessary to salvation, and the first and immediate mistake of it may be in it self inconsiderable, and yet that may usher in other, and those higher mistakes, (as we see error is fruitful, and grows worse and worse,) and at last end in destruction; as that cloud, which at first was no bigger than a mans hand, did quickly overcast the whole Heavens. The doctrine of predestination the Papists confess is not fundamental, since their own

Doctors are divided about it; yet if any man from St. Paul's assertions of the efficacy and immutability of Predestination, should infer the unnecessariness of Sanctification to salvation, (as some have done,) doubtless this man would wrest the Scriptures to his own destruction. But the Captain is not contented with a general imputation of darkness to the Scripture, but pretends several instances of things necessary to salvation, which are not plain and clear in the Scriptures: His instances are these.

1. The nature and number of the Sacraments. 2. The number of the Canonical books, and that the Scriptures are the word of God. 3. The incorruption of the Scripture. 4. The understanding the true sense of Scripture, which is literal, which mystical. 5. The number of fundamental points. 6. The doctrine of the Trinity: and 7. other doctrines concerning the baptizing of Infants, and womens receiving the Eucharist, and the observation of the Lords day, and the doctrine which condemns Rebaptization. All these, saith he, are necessary to salvation, and yet Scripture is not plain and clear in them. So that here are two assertions, and both of them false in most of the instances; and all are false in one of them. It pities me to trifle away time in the particular answer of such impertinent allegations, did not the weakness of some in believing all that is boldly asserted, make it necessary.

For the 1. The Scripture is plain enough in describing the nature of those two Sacraments, which Christ hath instituted, as the Captain might easily have informed himself, if instead of going to *Knot*, and *Fiat Lux*, &c. he had looked into almost any of our Protestant systems, or common places of Divinity, whither I refer the Reader, having somewhat else to do, than to transcribe common places: And for the other 5 Sacraments I cannot say they are delivered in Scripture *more clearly* than the others,

thers, but I may say, they are *less darkly*, because indeed not delivered there at all, being only a fiction of their own, of which God may say, *They never came into my mind.*

For the 2. it is a crude and false assertion, which the Captain lays down, That it is necessary to salvation to believe all the books of the holy Scriptures to be the word of God, and to believe nothing to be the word of God which is Apocryphal. If the latter part be true, woe to the Church of *Rome* that now is, which hath owned those writings for the word of God in the Council of *Trent*, which by the judgment of so many most learned Fathers and grave Councils, and the Church of so many successive ages have ever been held for Apocryphal, as no rational man can doubt, that shall take the pains to read either of those excellent pieces, *R.ynoldus de libris Apocryphis*, or Bishop *Consens* his scholastical history of the Canon of the Scripture. And if the former part be true, then we must damn all those Fathers and Churches, who (as both Papists and Protestants acknowledge) did sometimes doubt of some books now universally received: nay farther, we must damn all the former ages, and Churches, and innumerable holy and learned Writers, and even many of the most famous Papists themselves, who did all disown and disbelieve some at least of those Books, which (if we take the judgement of the *Trent* Council) are and were a part of the word of God. The truth is, (and so it is generally owned by Protestant writers) That the belief of those Truths contained in the Scriptures is necessary to salvation, though haply a man through ignorance or error should doubt about some one book. It is necessary that I should believe the history of Christs life and death, but it is not necessary to salvation simply and absolutely to believe that the Gospel of *St. Mark* (for instance) was written by divine inspiration.

on. This may appear from hence, because Faith is sufficient for Salvation, and *faith comes by hearing*, Rom. 10. as well as by reading: now as Faith might be, and really was wrought by the hearing of the doctrine and history of Christ, when preached by such Ministers as were not divinely inspired, so might it be wrought by the reading of such things, when written by the very same persons; and consequently it was not, and is not necessary to the working of Faith, (and therefore to the procuring of salvation,) to believe, that St. *Marks* Gospel was written by Divine inspiration. And yet I do not assert this, as if I thought that it were not a very great sin, (especially in and after so much light about it) to disbelieve any one book of the Scriptures, there being so many evident characters of a Divine inspiration upon the particular books, besides the general assertion, 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by divine inspiration*, and other convincing places, but only to shew, That (which is a certain and evident Truth) it is not simply and absolutely, and *ex natura rei* necessary for every person to believe every particular Book to be the word of God, but a serious and practical belief of the Truths contained in those Books, may be sufficient to salvation, even where there is an ignorance (if not wilful and affected) of the divine Authority of some book or books of Scripture.

3. For the third thing, the incorruption of the Scripture, I answer,

1. The Scriptures incorruption in substantial and considerable points, besides that it is confessed by the learned Papists (as I have shewed before) doth sufficiently appear from it self, by the collation of one place of Scripture with another, as also by the collation of several copies. And one great argument of it may be fetched from (that which seems to thwart it, *viz.*) the various readings, which learned men have observed out of diverse  
copies,

copies, let any man look into them as he finds them collected in the late *Polyglotte Bible*, and his own eyes shall witness, that howsoever the differences of Readings are numerous, yet they are not of any moment, and indeed the differences in lesser matters are a considerable evidence of the Scriptures uncorruptedness in great, where in the copies do wonderfully consent.

2. If the Scriptures not evidencing its own incorruption, hinder its being a rule, then neither can the Scripture be so much as a part of our Rule, (which yet is granted by the most insolent of our Adversaries) for so the argument will carry it, if there be any strength in it, nor was the Decalogue a rule of life to the following generations of the *Israelites*, nor can the old and unrepealed acts of Parliament be a Rule to *England*, nor yet can Tradition be a Rule to the Papists, for the Papists not only confess its insufficiency to evince its own uncorruptedness, but acknowledge its actual corruptions in several points, (as hath been shewed before :) nor can the Decrees of Popes and Councils be a rule, which being writings, must needs be liable to the same imperfection & corruptions, that the Scriptures, because writings, are said to be subject to : and consequently, there is no rule neither for Papists nor Protestants, but every one may do that which seems right in his own eyes.

4. He pretends it is necessary to Salvation to understand which is the true sense of Scriptures ; when it is to be taken literally, when mystically, and this (saith he) cannot be understood from sole Scripture.

*Ans.* Here also both Propositions are remarkably false ;

1. It is not necessary to Salvation to a Christian to understand the true sense of every Scripture : if it were, what shall become of those Legions of poor deluded Papists, into whose devotion ignorance is so considerable an ingredient ? who neither understand the sense, nor are

permitted to read the words of the Scripture. 2. The sense of Scripture in fundamental points is clear & intelligible, and that from Scripture, which is its own best interpreter. And if we consult the best Expositors, either Popish or Protestant, we shall find they never so well unfold Scripture-ridles, (if I may so speak) as when they plow with the Scriptures heifer. Every puny knows the collation of parallel, or seemingly repugnant places, and the observation of the scope and coherence, and the like, are the best Keys to find out the true sense of the Scripture, and sufficient to discover it, unless the Readers ignorance or negligence, pride or prejudice stand in his way. I will take an instance from the Captain himself of those Scriptures which confute the *Arrians*: Joh. 10. 30. *I and my father are one*, but (saith the Captain) the *Arrian* will say this is meant of Oneness in affection; as *John* 17. 21. And here my Captain is gravelled, and half made an *Arrian*, and because he could not answer the *Arrian*, he concludes again, no body else can. But wiser men would have told him, that this *Arrian* gloss is confuted out of the Scripture; both out of the present Chapter, (the Captain and *Arrian* being more blind than the Jews, who understood Christs meaning better, viz. That he made himself God, v. 33.) and from other places of Scripture, where Christ is expressly called God, *Joh.* 1. 1. *the true God*, 1 *Joh.* 5. 20. *and thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, *Phil.* 26. And indeed the Council of *Nice* (as I shewed in the foregoing Discourse) did confute the *Arrian* Heresie out of the Scriptures, they saw no need of going further.

5. He alledgeth the number of Fundamental points, which (saith he) the Scripture determines not.

*Ans.* This is most false. The Scripture doth sufficiently determine fundamental points. I must not here run into another controversie concerning the number of fundamentals.

damentals. This may suffice at present, That the Scripture doth not press all Truths with equal vehemency; that there are some points, wherein the Scripture doth, though not approve of, yet dispense with differing opinions in Christians: such as those were concerning days, and meats, and ceremonies in Religion: and there are other points, which it urgeth upon us with highest penalties; such as that in *Joh. 8. 24.* *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall dye in your sins.* To me this is a rule: That to which God promiseth or annexeth salvation, is surely sufficient for salvation; I care not one straw for all the Roman Thunder-claps of Damnation, where I have one promise from God for my salvation. I am assured by God that to fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man, *Eccles. 12. 12.* That he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him, *Acts 10. 35.* That this is life eternal, to know thee to be the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, *Joh. 17. 3.* and consequently if I know him, and believe in him, his son, and office, and work, I may humbly put in my claim for eternal life, and have not so much reason to fear their curling of me, (knowing that the curse causeless shall not come) as they have to fear the curse of God, and an addition to their plagues for adding to God's word, *Rev. 22. 18.* In a word, the fundamentals or substantials of Religion do apparently lie in two things, the Law, and the Gospel: the Scripture tells me, that love is the fulfilling of the law, *Rom. 13. 10.* that he that loveth Christ shall be loved of his father, *Joh. 14. 21.* that hereby we know that we are passed from death to life, because we love the brethren, *1 Joh. 3. 14.* It tells me also, That faith in Christ is the fulfilling of the Gospel: ye believe in God, believe also in me, *Joh. 14. 1.* and those things are written, that ye might believe, that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life in his name, *Joh. 20. 31.* Christ hath assured

assured us, (it seems he should have asked his Vicars leave for it,) *He that believeth on me hath everlasting life,* Joh. 3. 30. For my part I am not afraid to venture my salvation upon this promise: and for Popish comminations and curses, I shall only say with the Psalmist, *Let them curse, but bless thou,* Psal. 109. 28.

By these things we see the Scripture sufficiently informs us of fundamentals. To which I might add the common sense of Gods Church, and the learned Ministers in all ages, it having been acknowledged by the most eminent Doctors, both antient and modern, both Popish and Protestant, (as may be seen at large in *Dr. Potters want of Charity charged upon Romanists,* and *Mr. Chillingworths Defence of it,*) That the Creed, commonly called the Apostles Creed, doth contain in it a compleat body of the fundamentals of salvation for the *Credenda*, and all the Articles of the Creed are sufficiently evidenced from the Scriptures, as I could with great facility demonstrate, but I study brevity.

But you must know, the Church of *Rome* hath another notion of Fundamentals, a rare notion I tell you, for you shall not find the like either in Scripture, or any antient Author. They make the Churches definition the rule of Fundamentals: That is a Fundamental Truth, and *de fide*, which the Church determines and decrees, though never so inconsiderable; and that is no Fundamental, nor *de fide*, which the Church hath not determined, though it be never so material. Thus to fast in Lent, and on Fridays, if the Church command it, is now become a Fundamental, and if any man obstinately refuse it, *God will assuredly condemn such a person,* saith an English Apostate; *Cressy* sect. 2. ch. 13. n. 2. though he there confesseth it is but an action little more than circumstantial: yet on the other side it is no Fundamental to hold, That all men (except Christ) are conceived in sin, because the Church (forsooth) hath

not



not determined the Question of the Blessed Virgin. Thus with the Romanists it is a fundamental doctrine to believe that *Paul* left his Cloak at *Troas*, (namely if the Church injoyn you to believe it, for there is the knack; it is not Fundamental, because *St. Paul* asserts it, *2 Tim.* 4. 13. but because *St. Peters* successor of the Church injoyns you to believe it;) but it is no Fundamental, that *Christ* is *God*, if the Church doth not oblige you to believe it. Did I say it was not a Fundamental? I do them wrong in not speaking the whole truth; for so far are they from owning it for a Fundamental Article, that they will not allow it to be an article or object of our Faith, without such confirmation and injunction from the Church, as I shewed in the beginning of the foregoing Discourse. But this is so gross a cheat, and such a groundless imposture, wholly destitute of all appearance of proof, that it is a vanity to spend time in the confuting of it. If any Papist think otherwise, let him give us solid proofs, That the Pope or Council have such dominion over our Faith; That Fundamentals are all at their mercy; though methinks the very mention of such a conceit is abundant confutation, nor can any man be more absurd, than to say, That it is no Fundamental to believe that *God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, (unless the Churches Authority command us to believe it,) and that it is a Fundamental to believe (that which so many of the Antients did not believe, *viz.*) the falsehood of the Millenary opinion, or of the admission of departed Saints to the Beatifical Vision before the day of Judgment, (because these are determined by the Church: ) And there is nothing which more essentially overthrows the Popish conceit of Fundamentals, than the consideration of the Pillar upon which they build it, which is the Churches Infallible authority, as the Answerer of Bishop *Laud* Discourseth, whose great argument is this: *whosoever*

ever refuseth to believe any thing sufficiently propounded to him for a truth revealed from God, commits a damnable sin: but whosoever refuseth to believe any point sufficiently propounded to him or defined by the Church as matter of the faith, refuseth to believe a thing sufficiently propounded to him for a truth revealed from God: this is proved from hence, because general Councils cannot err. Where to say nothing of the Major, you see this man proves (and the Church of Rome hath no better proofs) *incertum per incertius*, their notion of Fundamentals from the opinion of Councils infallibility: and the infallibility of Councils having been abundantly evinced to be but a Chimærical Imagination, I must needs conclude, That the foundation being fallen, the superstructure needs no strength of argument to pull it down. If any desire to see this wild conceit baffled, he may find it done in that excellent discourse of Mr. *Stillingfleets*, part. 1. chap. 2, 3, 4.

For the sixth particular, the doctrine of the Trinity: it is true, that is a real Fundamental; but to say, that is not clearly proved from the Scripture, and for one that pretends he was a Protestant to say thus, I confess it is one of those many arguments, which give us too much occasion to ascribe the Captains change to any thing rather than to the convictions of his conscience, or the evidence of his cause. Behold the harmony between Socinianism and Popery! Rather than not assert the Churches authority, these men will renounce the great principles of Christianity, and put this great advantage into the Socinians hands, to confess that they cannot be confuted by Scripture. But the learned Papists are of another mind in their lucid intervals, and some of them (as *Smiglecius*) have sufficiently overthrown the Socinian Heresie from Scripture evidence: however I am sure Protestants have abundantly evinced it. Let any man read but those excellent discourses of *Placcus* about the Præexistence of Christ

Christ before his birth of the Virgin, and his Divinity, and he will be of another mind. But this shews the Captain was prepared to receive any thing, that could so easily believe a proposition, which he could not but know from his own experience to be horribly false, unless he were shamefully ignorant.

7. For the remaining points, they split upon the same Rocks with the former, for there is none of them but is sufficiently evident from Scripture, as hath been fully proved by those who have treated of those matters, (but I must forbear digressions.) And besides, (in the sense he intends) he will find it an hard matter to prove their necessity to salvation: if he think otherwise, let him try his strength.

And this may satisfy the third argument concerning the Scriptures darkness in things said to be necessary to salvation.

A fourth argument urged against the Scriptures supremacy is, that we have not the Originals, but only Copies and Translations, and these made by fallible men, and therefore it cannot be a certain rule of our Faith. This hath been answered in the former Discourse, it will suffice therefore briefly to suggest some few things.

1. This argument (if solid and weighty) will prove that no Copies nor Translations can be a Rule to us, that only the Original Decalogue, which was written by Gods own fingers, was a Rule to the Jews, and consequently, that Transcript of it which by Gods appointment the Prince had, and was obliged to read, was no rule to him: which how false it is, will appear from *Deut. 17. 18, 19.* ---When he siteth upon the Throne, --he shall write him a Copy of this Law in a Book out of that which is before the Priests the Levites, ---and he shall read therein, --that he may learn to keep all the words of this Law, and these Statutes to do them. By which the Reader will quickly

ly discern what weight is in this part of the Discourse : That a Copy cannot be a certain rule, for the Princes rule is but a Copy, & the Transcription of that not limited to an infallible hand. When *Moses* of old time was read in the Synagogues every Sabbath day, *Acts* 15. 21. it is to be presumed, each of them had not the Original of God's writing, yet was it never rejected from being a rule upon that account. What rare work would this notion make in a Kingdome, if throughly prosecuted ? Belike the Captain doth not hold his Statute book a rule to him, because it is not the Original. And observe the horrible partiality of these men : The Decrees of the Pope or Council, suppose of *Trent*, are a Rule and a certain one too to our English Papists, though they have nothing of them but a Copy and a Translation ; but the Scripture cannot be a Rule, because it is only a Copy and Translation. The law of God or the Church is a rule to the hearers, when it is delivered only by a Popish Priest ( and he confessedly fallible ) by word of mouth, and it ceaseth to be a rule, when it is delivered by writing by a fallible hand : yet surely the one is but a copy as well as the other, though made by diverse instruments.

2. The copies and Translations of Scripture are a sure and certain rule, because they do sufficiently evidence themselves to be the word of God, and the same for substance with the Original. The incorruption of the Scriptures in substantial things is sufficiently evinced from the confession of its greatest Adversaries the Papists, from the consent of Copies taken by persons of several ages, and far distant places, and contrary principles, from the innumerable multitude of copies every where dispersed, and the constant jealousie and watchfulness of so many wise and zealous Christians, ready to observe the least considerable corruption, & give warning of it, and many other considerations. All those arguments which are pleaded

ded both by Papists and Protestants for the Divinity of the Scripture, they reach to copies and Translations: In these, as well as in the Originals is the majesty of the Style, the sublimity of the doctrines, the purity of the matter, the excellency of the design: To these as well as the Originals God hath given so many signal testimonies by the conversion of thousands, by frequent and illustrious miracles, by the cooperation of his Spirit with them in the hearts of his people, and many other arguments, which (when a Papist is in a good mood, and disputing with a Pagan) must pass for undeniable demonstrations of the truth of Christianity and the Divinity of the Scriptures. And for the differences in Translations, (either noted by the Papists, or confessed by any of the Protestants,) which the Captain makes a great Flourish with, and other Papists make such triumphs at, they are so petite and trivial, and so little concerning the substance and foundation of Religion or the Scripture, that to me it affords an unquestionable evidence, That our Translations are unblameable in fundamental places, because all their great wits and learned Doctors to this day could not discover any such mistakes, though they have made it their business to find them out. But I shall say no more to this argument in this place, having in the former part of the Treatise spoken to it.

A fifth argument is taken from the seeming contradictions which are in Scripture, not resolveable by the Scripture. Hence (saith the Captain) Reason conceiveth her self to have this infallible demonstration, *viz.* no one who speaketh two things, the one contrary to the other, is infallible in speaking; but the Scripture so speaketh, therefore saith Reason the Scripture is not infallible in speaking. Nay (he might and should have said) the Scripture is not credible in speaking: and therefore say I, by the ~~verie~~ <sup>very</sup> of this argument the Captain must either acknowledge

knowledge himself an unreasonable man, or an Atheist. I tell you it was good hap, That instead of the Catholick Gentleman he did not meet with an Atheist, for the arguments which convinced him are indifferently calculated for either Meridian. But for all those seeming contradictions, the short Answer is this.

1. That there are no such places, but are capable of convenient reconciliations, as hath been already made good by several learned men both Papists & Protestants, who have professedly treated of those matters, and discovered the vanity of this objection. And if it were granted, That there are some places which men have not yet hit upon the right way of reconciling, that is no evidence of the impossibility of it, since we can give instances in others, which in former times were thought as insoluble, as any now are, which the learning and diligence of after ages hath fully cleared from all semblance of contradiction.

2. Those seeming contradictions are either reconcilable out of Scripture, or else are but historical difficulties, not at all necessary to salvation. The Captain should do well to put the parts of his discourse together, and see how they agree; because he will not, I will do it for him. The Proposition which Protestants assert, and he attempts to disprove is, That the Scripture is a perfect Rule in things necessary to salvation. This he disproves by instancing in some insoluble difficulties in matters unnecessary to salvation. But we must pardon him, it is *vicious cause*, the cause affords no better arguments.

A sixth argument is this. *Scripture is no sufficient rule, because it is liable to diverse and contrary expositions.*

An invincible argument, by which a man may dispute all Rules out of the world. *Probatum.* The Decalogue is no rule of life or manners, for the Pharisees understood it one way, Christ another, *Mat. 23.* The Statutes of the Kingdom are

are no rule, for learned Lawyers differ in their expositions. The decrees of Popes and Councils are no rule, because lyable to diverse and contrary expositions, so far, that *Gratian* the Compiler of their Canon Law hath one entire Title *De Concordantia discordantium Canonum*, i. e. concerning the reconciling of disagreeing Canons. And there is this remarkable difference between the condition of the Romish and our affairs: our differences are in the exposition and accommodation of the Rule, but Popish differences are in the Text and rule it self, since there are amongst them not only diverse and contrary expositions of the same Canon, (which yet is sufficient to take off all their glorying over us, and to bring them to our level) but indeed there are contrary Texts; the decrees and sentences of one Pope directly contrary to another, and one Council to another. Pope *Stephen* nulls the decrees of *Formosus*, the three next Popes null the decrees of *Stephen*, and re-establish those of *Formosus*. *Sergius* the third comes after, and again nulls *Formosus* his decree. But I will tell you of a greater matter, even no less than the Authentical Translation of the Bible: *Sixtus* the 5th sets forth one Bible An. 1590. not rashly, but deliberately, with the advice of his Cardinals, the Assistance of the most learned men of all the Christian world; (they are his own words) corrects the errors of the Press with his own hand, imposeth this upon the whole Church. Within 3 years comes *Clemens* the 8th, and he puts forth another Edition, not only diverse, but in several passages directly contrary to it, (for which I refer the reader either to those two Bibles themselves, or to Dr. *James* his *Bellum Papale*, and the Defence of it, where he shall find above a thousand differences between them,) yet *Clemens* suppresseth all other Translations, and enjoins this for the only Authentick Translation, and so it is held to this day. The like I might shew of Councils, as it were

ease to furnish the Reader with many instances not of the seeming but real contradictions of Popes and Councils among themselves, and yet (forsooth) the appearance of a contradiction must exauctorate the Scriptures, when real contradictions shall not prejudice the authority of Pope and Council; so true it is, that some may better steal a Horse than others look over the hedge.

The seventh assault which the Captain makes is this. *If the Scripture be our sole rule and judge, then it was so in the Apostles dayes; and if so, the Authority of the Apostles ceased when they had done writing.*

I answer 1. The Consequence may very well be denied from the Apostles times to ours. The argument is this. Scriptures were not the only rule, when there were several governours of the Church acknowledged on all hands to be infallible both singly and joyntly: *Ergo*, it is not the only rule now, when there is no person nor persons in the Church, but who is proved to be fallible. For this is the case at this day, unless the Captain and Mr. Cressy and the rest will change their notes, and instead of the Pope and Council combin'd, say that the Pope alone is infallible, wherein I desire to understand their minds.

2. The other Consequence hath not a Drachm more of Truth in it. For if the Scripture were the sole rule, yet did not the Apostolical Authority cease. It is no diminution to their Authority to say, they had not a power superior to the Scripture or the word of God, *i.e.* That the Servant was not above his Master; the Apostles never pretended to such a power, but rather carried themselves in all things as became those who professed their subjection to the word of their God and Lord. Observe the manner of their proceeding in that great Council, *Act. 15.* Still you shall find the Scripture is the rule, by which they guide the whole debate, and from which they draw their conclusion, as none that read that Chapter can deny. You may



may observe that an Apostle (and he too of so great Authority that he durst reprove St. Peter to his face, *Gal. 2.*) makes no scruple of circumscribing his own Authority within the limits of Gods word, and he repeats it in *re-memoriam*, *Though we, or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed*, *Gal. 1. 8.* I know it is said by Mr. White in his Apology for Tradition, that this place makes for Tradition rather than for Scripture, and for what the Apostles delivered by word of mouth, not what they left in Writing. To which the reply is most easy, That since the Doctrine delivered by the Apostles, either by Word or Writing is and must be confessed to be of equal Authority (the Council of Trent goes no higher, while they assert, that Scripture and Tradition are to be received *pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia*, with equal piety and reverence) it consequently follows, that he who renounceth all pretensions of Authority superior, or not subordinate to the one, cannot be said with any colour of sense to challenge a supremacy over the other. The Apostles had not so learned Christ as they who arrogate the name of their Successors have: The power they claimed was not Autocratical and Despotical, having dominion over the peoples Faith, and being Lords over Gods Heritage, but only Ministerial, not for destruction, but for edification; not coordinate, but subject unto their Master and his Word.

The last reason he urgeth is, that this opinion of sole Scripture makes every man Judge who take upon them to read and understand the Scripture.

*Ans.* 1. If it be meant a private Judge, so far as it concerns his own actions; it is true, and that judgement (as I have shewed) the Scripture allows, and enjoyns to private Christians, and informs us of the sad condition of those, that neglecting their own judgment, give up

themselves to a blind obedience to their rulers (an error common to the Jews of old and the Papists now) assuring us this is no excuse nor security to them, but *if the blind lead the blind both will fall into the ditch*, Matth.

15. 14.

4. The Papists themselves however they renounce this principle of every mans being judge, in words and shew, yet they receive it in truth, and practise upon it, and what ever noise they make of Fathers and Councils and the Pope and Church, yet in truth they make particular men the Judges for their own actions. For instance if we examine the grounds and manner of the Conversion (as they miscall it) of any man to the Romish Religion (take *Cressy* and the Captain for instances) we shall find the Papists that dealt with them, made them Judges. And when the Captain yields to that great Argument, *viz.* That if he did not turn Catholick, he had no infallible assurance that the Christian Religion was true, was not he himself judge of the validity of this Argument? And when *Cressy* or others are perverted by that great Title of the Churches Authority to which they think all should be subject, what do they but make themselves Judges of this question upon which all depends, whether the Churches Authority be a sufficient and safe Foundation for a mans Faith to rest upon? So if I come to any Papist who is capable of Discourse, I would ask him whether he continues in the Popish Communion and belief with reason or without it? If he say, without reason, I shall forbear discoursing with bruit creatures: If with reason, I demand what it is? and here he will enter into a large harangue, concerning the necessity of a living and infallible judge for the ending of Controversies, and that the Pope or Councils is this Judge. In this case I say, the Romanist makes himself the judge of the first and principal question, upon which all the rest depend, *viz.* whether

whether such a Judge be necessary, and whether the Pope or Council be this Judge: As certainly as St Paul argues 1 Cor. 6. They that are fit to judge the greater and weightier causes, cannot be unfit to judge the smaller matters.

Thus have I gone over all the Arguments or appearances of reason, which the Captain, or others for him, have collected & what Mr. Cressy hath pleaded for any of them: I shall in the next place proceed to answer what farther Arguments I meet with either in Mr. Cressy, or in that famous (or rather infamous) piece, called Rushworth's Dialogues, or in Mr. White's Apology for Tradition; For doubtless — *si Pergama dextrâ Defendi possent, dextrâ hac defensa fuissent.* And if men of their parts and learning and study in the Controversie can say nothing to purpose against the Scriptures being a perfect rule, I shall with greater security acquiesce in the Truth of the Protestant Doctrine.

Another Argument therefore against the Scriptures is taken from the occasion of writing the Books of the New Testament, of which Cressy treats *Sect. 2. chap. 10.* And it is observable, that his Argument (however it regularly ought to reach the whole Scripture, yet) is only (upon the matter) levied against the Epistles in the new Testament, which (saith he) were never intended to be Written as Institutions or Catechisms, containing an Abridgement of the whole body of Christian Faith for the whole Church, for they were written only to particular Persons or Congregations (without order to communicate them to the whole Church) and they were written meerly occasionally, because of some false Doctrines, which if those Hereticks had not chanced to have broached, they had never been written: And therefore surely are very improper for a rule of Faith (which must be so true, and clear, and evident, that there can be no rational possibility of contradiction

or diversity of opinion) and for a man to venture his Soul upon. This is the sum of that discourse (excepting what he saith of the obscurity of the Scriptures which I have considered before.)

For answer, 1. Since Mr. *Cressy* requires it in a rule of Faith that it be so true, and clear, and so evident, that there can be no rational possibility of contradiction or diversity of opinion; let him, or rather any other disinterested or unprejudiced person seriously consider, what hath been discoursed in the former Treatise, and Answer it to his own conscience, as he will give his account to God another day whether the Popish rule of Faith be so true, and clear, and evident, &c. as is pretended to be necessary; or rather, whether it be not so dark and doubtful, that it is not only rejected by Protestants upon solid and cogent grounds, but also disputed and denied by diverse of their own great Doctors: The question (under favour) is not this, whether our rule be so clear as to admit of no possibility of contradiction, (for who can dream of this that ever heard or read of the Academicks, whose great principle was to contradict every thing, and be confident of nothing?) but whether the Popish rule or ours be better, whether is more true, clear, and evident? And this one would think should not be very difficult to determine. And whether the Protestant rule be so evident, that it may satisfy the Conscience and Reason and prudence of any modest, humble, and diligent enquirer, though it may not silence the clamours of every bold cavalier, since there have been (and probably yet are) in the world men so absurdly sceptical, that they have cavilled against the certainty of this Proposition, that Two and Three make Five.

2. The occasionality and particularity of those Writings is no impediment to their being a rule, (though this is a notion the Popish Writers oft mention and vehemently

mently urge upon the simpler sort of men) it neither hinders their being a rule, nor their being a perfect rule.

1. Not the former, the papists themselves being judges, for they acknowledge it to be *regula partialis*, a part of the rule (I tell you Christ is exceedingly beholden to them, that will acknowledge thus much, and allow him any share in the rule of his Church.) The Council of *Trent* in its decrees concerning the Canonical Scriptures, notwithstanding this objection ascribes this to the Scriptures no less than to Traditions, *That both of them together are the Canon or rule of Faith and manners, and to both they allow equal piety and reverence, as I said before.* Will any man lay the Law concerning inheritances delivered *Numb. 27.* was no Law or rule to the Israelites, because it was delivered upon the extraordinary occasion of *Zelophehads* daughters petition? Or that the Law against the Priests drinking of wine, when he was to go into the Tabernacle, *Levit. 10. 9.* was no rule to the Priests, because delivered peradventure upon the occasion of some intemperance of *Nadab* and *Abihu*? 2. Nor doth this at all hinder the Scriptures being a perfect rule, partly because this Objection concerns only one part of the New Testament, *viz.* the Apostolical Epistles: But for the Gospels, which of themselves are a sufficient rule (though the addition of the other is an abundant consolation, and a rich mercy) Mr. *Cressy* confesseth they were written upon no special occasion, but for the common benefit of all succeeding Christians, as an History of his Life and Death, and a sum of the principal points of his Doctrine, (They are the Authors words, and we need no more to justify the Scriptures sufficiency) and partly because the occasions, however casual to men; yet were foreseen and foreordained by God to be such as would recur in all following Ages; and partly because the Apostle extends his thoughts and instructions beyond

the present occasion, upon which, or particular person or persons, to which he Writes even to following Ages, and consequently intended them for rules and directions, not only to them, but to others, yea to all succeeding Christians. What else means St. Paul in charging Timothy to keep the command there mentioned -- *untill the appearing of Christ*, 1 Tim. 6. 14. which St. Paul knew was at a great distance, 2 Thes. 2. 1. if he did not include his Successors? The books of the old Testament, at least diverse of them were written upon special occasion, and yet St. Paul hath given it under his hand, *That whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning*, Rom. 15. 4. and that all those Scriptures are profitable (to us) for doctrine, reproof, &c. 2 Tim. 3. 16. An irrefragable Argument that what was written upon a special occasion may be a standing rule. And the constant universal practice of all the Antient Fathers & Councils confirming Truths or Duties, & reproving sins or errors in after ages from the Testimonies of the Apostolical Epistles, doth unquestionably evince that they judged them however directed to particular persons or Churches, yet indeed designed for a rule of the Church in all following Generations.

That particular occasions have given the rise to such general rules and laws as have been of perpetual force and use, no man that knows any thing can be ignorant. And that really this was the case, and that the principles, Doctrines, and Instructions, which are laid down by the Apostles in their Epistolary Writings, how particular soever the occasion might be that drew them forth, are in their own nature and quality indifferently calculated for, and equally fit to be a guide to other persons or Churches, needs no proof, but the reading of them, and a reflection upon the daily practice of all Preachers as well Popish as Protestants, which from time to time deduce such

Such documents from them as are singularly useful in whatsoever age or place they live in.

And this may serve Mr. *Cressy's* turn, for I meet with nothing else considerable to this point in his Book. In the next place I shall consider what Mr. *Rushworth* saith (who in the opinion of the Romanists is *πῶλον ἀντάξιον*) in his famed Dialogues: His Arguments against the Scriptures being Judge of Controversies are two: The first is (that which hath been already handled) from the errors and corruptions which must needs be in our Bible, by Copists and Translators: And here he sets his wit upon the rack to devise whatever could be said to blast the credit and the Authority of the Scripture. Here he tells us of the many hazards, doubts, & mistakes, from multitude of Copies, depravations of Hereticks, the Jewes at *Tiberias* and Greeks elsewhere, mistakes of the negligent or ignorant Transcriber, multiplicity of Translations, equivocation of words which are used in several senses according to the variety of times, places, and persons, the ceasing of these Tongues in which Scripture was written, and the quality of the Hebrew and Greek Tongues: He computes how many errors probably might be in the Copies of the Bible, *we may well allow* (saith he) *336 errors in one Copy, which admitted, you will find the number of errors in all the Copies made since the Apostles time fifteen or sixteen times as many as there are words in the Bible, and so by this account, it would be 15 or 16 to one of any particular place, that it were not the true Text, (These are his words Dialog. 2. Sect. 5.*

When I read these and other things of the same tendency, I began to reason with my self: Are these the Discourses of *William Rushworth* a Romish Priest? Are these the Arguments which must make men Christians or (which in their sense is all one) Roman Catholicks?

Is this the man that affected the rigour of Mathematical discourse even in his Controversies, as we may perceive by this work? for so Mr. White is pleased to tell us? ) Is this the Book that so learned, so ingenious a man as Mr. White must commend to the World, as that which was very satisfactory to diverse judicious persons: Surely 'tis a mistake, these are not Rushworths, but Vaninus his Dialogues, or it is a new found remnant of Julian the Apostate, which some unlucky Heretick hath set out under the name of a Romish Priest.

May I be so bold as to ask our Holy Mother the Church of Rome, *Num hæc est tunica filii?* Is this thy sons voice? No sure, it is some Priest of Apollo, bidding defiance to the Christian cause, and striving to render the Holy Scriptures contemptible and ridiculous. But you see what desperate men will do, in a desperate cause, rather than not maintain the Papall Authority, they will subvert the very foundations of Christianity. The Jesuites tell us, that in order to the coming of Antichrist, Rome shall turn Pagan: I am in part of their mind, and I think the turn is half wrought already: *Ecce signum!* for none short of a Pagan could talk at this rate: The insolency of the Discourse, and confidence of the Disputer, and the applause of his party makes it necessary that I should say something farther by way of Answer.

The first Answer (which alone may silence this impudent Objection) is this: Either this Argument proves nothing against us, or it proves more than the Papists, at least such of them as are not quite out of their wits and consciences too, would have it: let us reflect a little upon the premises, and then forecast the Conclusion, take all his discourse for granted, that by reason of the many mistakes, corruptions, doubts, difficulties, there is nothing but incertitude, that it is fifteen to one of any particular place,



place, that it is not the true Text, that it is as ridiculous to seek the decision of Controversies out of the Bible, as to cut with a Beetle, or to knock with a straw: These are the Authors words *Dialog. 2. Sect. 2.* Go say these are faint-hearted fellows if you can: Give me these honest souls that tell us plainly what they think of the Scriptures, and how little they value them. It were an hard case if all the Churches Adversaries were crafty companions: Now (say I) if these things be true, then certainly it was not without cause, that the Papists fore-mentioned said, that without the Churches Authority the Scriptures were of no more value than *Æsops Fables*. Then Father Costerus had good reason to say it was a *Sheath that would admit any Sword*, and *Pamelius* did rightly call it a *Nose of Wax*. If this were true, we might throw all our Bibles into the Fire, for Controversies cannot be decided thence, nor errors detected, no: truth evinced, (there's nothing there but uncertainty and darkness) and consequently our sins cannot be re-proved, nor duties pressed from the Scripture for the same reason, unless these men will say (who we see will not stick at small matters) that the Copists or Translators errors did happily hit only upon such places as concerned Controversies (that the Church alone might rule there) not at all on such as concern duties and sins: But if this be true, whence come those high Characters and ample testimonies which the most learned Papists and their Councils have given to the Scripture, that they acknowledge the Scriptures or Bible (and they spake of that which we have) to be the word of God, as much to be revered as Tradition it self? How came *Bellarmine* to say of these Books of the Prophets and Apostles (which we have) *Nihil notius, nihil certius, &c. i. e. nothing is more evident, nothing more certain* than that they are the Word of God, and none but a fool can deny them

them credit: *de verbo Dei*, lib. 1. c. 2. Whence it is that the Papists accuse the Protestants of slander, for saying they exaunder the Scripture? How is it that they all pretend the Church may not contradict those very Scriptures which we have? In my opinion the Church of Rome was woefully overseen in disputing with the Protestants out of the Scriptures or troubling themselves to answer the Scripture, which Protestants brought; for Mr. *Rushworth* hath furnished them with one Answer which will serve for an universal Plaister, therefore I would advise them thus to answer once for all, when a Protestant argues against merit from that Text, *When you have done all that you can, say, you are unprofitable servants*, Luk. 17. 10. Let them say it was the error of the Copist, and should have been, *profitable servants*. So when it is made a Character of the Apostasie of the latter times *forbidding to marry*, 1 Tim. 4. 3. it is but saying it was an error of the Copist, that put *forbidding* instead of *commanding*, (a familiar mistake at Rome) and then I think the Hericks are paid home. And so when Christ bids the people *Search the Scriptures*, say the Copist left out the word *not*, it should have been *Search not*, for so Tradition assures us: And so in a thousand other cases, I need no more than give the hint, A word is enough to the wise, as doubtless they at Rome are in their generation. In short, what do these men and such Arguments tend to, but to debauch the consciences of men, and depreciate the Scriptures, that if men have not so much grace as to abhor such heathenish discourses, it is enough to make the Scripture as insignificant a Writing, as the most contemptible Pamphlet that ever the World was pester'd with.

I easily apprehend there is one subterfuge, that the Adversaries of the holy Scriptures will think to make an escape at; They will say all this is true, there neither is,  
not

nor would be any thing at all certain, or credible, or clear in the Scripture, and the Sacred Writings we now have, but for the Infallibility of the Church, which from infallible Tradition receives them and delivers them to us: But I answer, 1. Wo to us Christians, if all the validity of the Scripture depended upon the infallibility of the Pope or a Council. Is not this a rare piece of intelligence for Heathens, and Atheists, and scoffers at the Scripture? Are not these men worthy Pillars of the Christian cause? 2. Tradition is not at all concerned in the present dispute, nor Infallibility neither: For suppose the utmost of what can be or is said by the Romanists in this matter, viz. that by Tradition we are infallibly assured that the Scriptures are the word of God, and that the several Books reputed Canonical by them are indeed Canonical, suppose I say we should take all this for granted, what is this to our business? Tradition (I hope) doth not infallibly assure them that the Copists committed no errors in Transcribing, nor the Translators in Translating. Tradition did not infallibly assure *Sixtus* the fifth, that his Translation was right, for it assured his Successor *Clement* 8. that it was corrupt in above a thousand places: And when those Popes put forth their Translations it sufficiently appears, and they confess it, they were not guided by inspiration, but proceeded in all things *more humano*, by collation of Copies, advice of learned men, as I mentioned before out of the Popes own words: And consequently if all Copies be so corrupt that we can have no certainty from them, no more could the Pope and his consultors have from those Copies they used, and therefore are lyable to the same uncertainties.

2. However Mr. *Rushworth* pleaseth himself in this Argument as if it were unanswerable, and Protestants were mad that did not yield to it; there is one plain evidence

evidence able to assure any rational man that there is no weight and force in it, because although these things have been formerly and frequently objected against the Scripture (for Mr. *Rushworth* was not the first Antiscripturist) yet diverse of the most learned, and discreet, and resolved Doctors of the Romish Church (who doubtless were too wise to let slip any real advantage, and knew very well how much their cause needed it) do utterly reject and deny it, and together with us do assert the uncorruptedness of the Books of Scripture now extant among us, as I before proved out of their own words.

3. Here is not any one convincing reason to persuade us of the corruption of the Scripture in substantiall things: All that Mr. *Rushworth* offers in lieu of those solid Arguments to disprove the Authority and purity of our Bible, is a collection of probabilities (which witty men can easily multiply upon all occasions) to shew, that errors have been frequently committed in Copies and Translations (which no man denies:) But alas how far short do they fall in proof, if they come to be scanned by any indifferent reason? That which seems to threaten most is the corruption of Hereticks, and we are told of the Jews at *Tiberias*, who pointed the Bible, when enemies to Christ, and thereby had opportunity to change the whole Text, as also of the Greek Hereticks. I am very willing the cause should be decided by this one point: For (as it is well argued by the Assertors of the Integrity of the Hebrew Text, to whom I refer the Reader, such as *Buxtorf*, and *Glassius*, and many others) if those Jews have corrupted the Hebrew Bible maliciously to weaken the Christian cause, certainly they have done it in those places which are of greatest importance to evince Christianity: But this it is notoriously known they have not done, since most of the convincing proofs  
of

of Christs being the true Messiah are taken out of that very Bible which came out of their hands : And for the Greek and other Hereticks, it is very true that some of them did attempt the corruption of some few Texts of Scripture, but the very attempt made such a noise in the Christian World, and the whole Church took such an alarm at it, that it was presently discover'd and abhor'd, & they severely censured for it, and even Papists confess the Doctors of the Church were so vigilant, that there could not be any wilful and material depravation of the Greek Testament, and the like may be said for the neglects or oversights of Copists. The Christians of former Ages had such an high opinion of the Scriptures necessity and transcendent excellency, that they kept it with all possible care; such exact acquaintance and familiar knowledge of the Scripture, that they could not but discover the least considerable error; such conscientious strictness, that they abhorred the least depravation, and such jealousy and watchfulness to observe and secure that inestimable treasure, that it cannot with any probability be imagined that substantial corruptions should come into the Texts, and much less can the contrary position be taken for demonstration.

4. As there is no cogent reason to argue the Bibles corruption, so there are sufficient evidences of its incorruption: Some I have now mentioned, to which may be added the general Inconsiderableness of those various lections (which Popish Writers triumph so much in) the sameness for substance in all the citations of Scripture in Authors of diverse Ages, and distant places, and several languages, the acknowledged incorruptedness of several other Authors (as to material points notwithstanding all the different readings) which yet were not read with that diligence and observation, nor received with  
that

that veneration, nor kept with that Religion, nor watched with that jealousy, nor were the corrupters of them terrified with such threatnings, nor mens own interests so deeply concerned in the conservation of their purity, and consequently were far more liable to errors or violations than the Scripture : To all which may be added, (that which alone is sufficient ) even the Providence and goodness of God, which as it mercifully gave these excellent Writings for mans conduct to eternal bliss, so it gives us just ground for a comfortable and confident expectation that it would preserve them to our use, and not suffer these ( Holy Writings ) to see corruption. This is so material a consideration even in the judgement of our Adversaries; that it is their principal Argument, and urged by them with greatest vehemency and plausibility for the Churches Authority and Infallibility, because ( as they pretend ) it doth not consist with the providence and goodness of God to leave his Church without an Infallible guide, so that both Papists and Protestants own the solidity of the Principle, and differ only in the application of it, whilst they urge it for the infallibility of the Pope and Council ( which as you have seen their own Authors are not satisfied in ) and we urge it for the Infallibility and incorruptibility of the Scriptures, (which all Protestants and diverse Papists assert.)

Thus I hope I have fully satisfied that first Argument. The other Argument which Mr. Rushworth suggests is taken from the nature of the Books of Scripture : *If a law were to be given in Writing it must be thus ; First, the common things must be commanded, then by degrees they must descend to particulars ; still observing that several matters should be under several Chapters or divisions, and not one piece here, another there, and things must be plain and distinct : From which it is evident enough that the*  
*Scripture*

Scripture was never intended for a Law or Judge of Controversies, because the book is so large, and so many things mingled unappertaining to the substance of our belief, as Historical, Epistolar, Mystical, and so many repetitions; and lastly it is left to a meer conjecture what may be the meaning of it. Thus Rushworth Dialog. 2. sect. 2.

Is this the Mathematical man? Is this the rigour of Mathematicks? This is enough to make a man forswear the study of the Mathematicks, if it produce no better Demonstration. We poor Protestants may well be content to submit to the Laws of these men, for you see they give Laws to God himself, and it is already enacted in the Conclave of Rome, that if God do not speak in Mood and Figure he shall not be heard; and that if he put forth any Law-book wherein he doth not rigorously observe the orders and methods of a System, it shall not be received. Believe me it was a good turn that Mr. Cowel writ his *Institutiones Juris Anglicani*, wherein he reduced the English Laws to a method, for else woe had been to our poor Statute-books, and all Records of our Laws, for as sure as a Club they had been voted to be no Laws, nor Judges of Controversies between men and men, for so saith our Theological *Euclide* that scorns to speak under a Demonstration, for we know how much more large a book they make than the Bible, and how many things are mingled unappertaining to the substance of our Estates and Lives, &c. The summ of the argument is this: The Scripture was not intended for the Law, because it is so large, so miscellaneous, so full of repetitions &c. Shall I need to say any more for the answer of such an Argument, wherein there is nothing evident but the Disputers confidence, and the Papists credulity, and the desperateness of their cause?

Ans. 1. If this Argument hold; the Old Testament or the Pentateuch was no Law to the Jews; But

this is false, and it was a Law to the Jews, *Ergo* the principle is false from which such a conclusion is deduced: The Major I prove from his own words, and besides he particularly disputes against the Old Testaments being a Law. The Minor I hope I shall easily prove: where, to prevent Equivocation or mistakes, take notice I meddle not with the ambiguous term of JUDGE, we are now disputing, whether it were a Law; Nor do I meddle with that question, whether it be a Law to us, but to the Jews. This then I assert, that the Old Testament (notwithstanding this objection) was a Law to the Jews, and a man would think the very mention of the Proposition should cut off all necessity of proof, it is so absurd and portentous a thing to Christian ears to hear so evident and received an assertion questioned: I prove it only by this Argument; That book by which both People and Priests, and Princes of the Jews were to be guided, and ruled, and commanded in their Decisions, was certainly a Law to them, But such was the Old Testament. 1. For the people it is plain: They are commanded to observe to do all the words of the Law that are written in this Book, Deut. 28. 58. And Moses makes bold to call it a Law Book, notwithstanding all the mixtures, repetitions, &c. and a curse is pronounced to every one that continued not in all things written in the Book of the Law to do them, Gal. 3. 10. and for the guidance of the people, those books were to be read by or to the people, Deut. 31. 9. Jos. 8. 35. Neh. 8. and diverse other places. 2. For the Princes it is no less evident that it was a Law and rule to them, Jos. 1. 8. *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein.* And Deut. 17. 18, 19. *When he sitteth upon the Throne---he shall Write him a Copy of this Law in a book out of that which*



is, before the Priests, the Levites, and he shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord,--to keep all the words of this Law and these statutes to do them.

Thus it is undeniable, it was a law both to Prince and People, and that is sufficient to overthrow the whole argument. But I add 3. it was a Law to the Priests too. I do not now dispute whether the people were absolutely tyed to follow the Priests decision, (I think the contrary hath been sufficiently evidenced,) but my present assertion is only this, The books of Scripture were a Law to the Priests, by which they were to be ordered and regulated in their proceedings. The sentence which the Priests were to pronounce, it must be *the sentence of the Law*, Deut. 17. 11. and the Priests are oft censured and condemned for neglecting or transgressing the Law, which plainly shews it was the law and rule of their proceedings.

*Ans.* 2. But what shall we say if the Papists themselves deny their own Conclusion, which here they endeavour *tanta molimine* to prove? You will say we have little reason to believe those that do not believe themselves, or to assent to that Conclusion which they deny. To make good this, you must remember the question is not about the Judge, properly so called, but about the Rule or Law, to which we suppose the Judge to be tyed: for if the Scripture had been compiled in the form of a law with the greatest exquisiteness, this would not have satisfied our Masters the Jesuites, but there must have been another, & that a living Judge of controversies. This premised I thus proceed: Either they of the Church of Rome have a Law, by which they regulate all their Decrees and decisions, or they have none: if they say, they have none, then they act lawlessly and arbitrarily, and we have found Antichrist by his Character *ἀνόμω*, or *lawless*, 2 Thes. 2. but if they say, (as they all pretend and profess) they are guided by a Law, then I enquire, what that Law is?

Here it is true they are divided, while some make the judgment of the antient Church and Fathers their law, others the Popes Decrees, others the Acts of Councils, but all of them pretend some Law or other, and which opinion soever of their Church they take (for they have good choice,) either their argument hath no force against the Scriptures being our Law, or it equally militates against their own Laws. As, for instance, if they make the judgement of the Fathers their Law, are they not lyable to the same exceptions with the Scripture, of largeness, alien mixtures, repetitions, &c. And the like may be said of Pope's Decretals, and the Acts of Councils, (which they generally pretend to own as their Law:) and it is no less true of Tradition, of the largeness whereof one may say, (as was formerly said of *Livy*,) *Quas mea non tota Bibliotheca capit*; for according to the estimate which a learned Author of their own makes, (*Charron* by name,) the Scripture is but *minima pars veritatis revelata*, the least part of revealed Truth. He that pleaseth may see good store of them collected by that great terror of the Papists, *Monlin*, in a Treatise of his in French, concerning Traditions. Nay (to put all out of doubt) these very men, that argue at this rate, though they do not acquiesce in the Scripture as a Judge, yet they do own it for a Law; they confess the word of God is their Rule and Law, only they make (as I may say) this law to consist of two Tables, the written and unwritten Word, which you saw the Council of *Trent* receive with equal piety and reverence. Now certainly they that subscribe to this (as the Papists generally do,) they own the Scripture for a Law, though not for a compleat and sufficient Law: nor doth the investing of Tradition with the quality of a Law, devalue the Scripture of it any more than the addition of new Acts of Parliament doth derogate the name and Authority of a Law from all former Acts and statutes,

statutes, that is, not at all. Much more might be said to shew the folly and absurdity of this argument, but if I should spend more words about it, I should both question my own, and too grossly distrust the Readers discretion.

And now having done with the Mathematicks, let us come to the Politicks, the best argument the Church of Rome hath. Politick Mr. White, who seeing their Scripture arguments in the luds, and for the Fathers *pila militaria pilis*, comes in to succour a falling cause with politick considerations, and moral conjectures, and fine-spun probabilities. No man can deny that it was politickly done when they saw their Church could prove nothing, to assert, that her bare saying was sufficient; that the testimony of the present Church, that she holds nothing but what she hath received from Christ and the Apostles, is security enough for a Christian Faith. But this notion I have largely examined, and I hope Mr. White will abate something of his confidence in it; therefore I have nothing to do here, but to consider what he alledged against the Scriptures being a Rule or Judge of Controversies, and (excepting what hath been before discussed) I find only one Argument that can pretend to merit any consideration, and it is delivered by him *pro more* with great confidence and contempt of his Adversaries. When the Protestants ask the question, as well they may, cannot the Bible make it self be understood as well as *Plato* and *Aristotele*? (a question which all the wits of the Roman Church, not excluding M. White, were never able to answer,) and thence infer that the Scripture is sufficiently intelligible, and able to decide Controversies. Mr. Whites answer and argument against the Scripture is this: That this depends upon a most false supposition, viz. that the Scripture was written of those controversies which now are: whereas it is a most shameless proposition to say, the Scriptures

were written of the controversies long after their date; sprung up in the Christian world: beginning from Genesis to the Apocalypse let them name one Book whose Theme is any now controverted point between Protestants and Catholics. *Apolo-  
logy for Tradition, fifteenth Encourer.* And consequently the Scripture is no fit Judge for our Controversies. This, you must know, is the argument of another Mathematical Papist, who cries out of Protestants for resting in probabilities, yet can satisfy himself (or at least pretends to do so) with such absurd & improbable ratiocinations. O the power of prejudice or interest! (for I cannot tell which it is that blinds such men as Mr. White.) Be of good cheer, Protestants, the Papists are upon their last legs: you see their arguments run very low.

The Answer is this in short, (for truly it needs no long nor laborious reply, how much soever Mr. White is conceited of it.) It is not a most shameless but a most shameful proposition, to say the Scripture is unable to decide any of those controversies, which are since sprung up in the Christian world. Is there any Freshman in the University ignorant of this, that *Rectum est index sui & obliqui*; that the assertion of a truth is sufficient for the confutation of all contrary errors, wheresoever or whensoever broached. I may say to Mr. White, as they did to Moses, *Wilt thou put out the eyes of these men?* Doth Mr. White think his Readers would have neither wit nor conscience? I ask whether those passages of Scripture, *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God, Joh. 1. 1. who is over all God blessed for ever, Rom. 9. 5. This is the true God and eternal life, 1 Joh. 5. 20. Before Abraham was I am, Joh. 8. 58.* do not solidly and sufficiently confute the late sprung Socinian Heresie, and prove Christ's Divinity and præ-existency before his Incarnation? If he say no, I will promise him hearty thanks (though not from Christ, nor peradventure from his Vi-  
car,

car, yet ) from all the *Socinians* in the world, and then he would do well to answer what *Placens*, and other of the Protestants, or rather (as a demonstration of the unity of the *Romish Church*) what *Smiglecius*, and others of his brother-Romanists have argued from those places, or else let him give us the reason, why his Brethren should play the Knaves, and own and urge those things for solid arguments, which they did not think so. If he say, yea, then down falls all this goodly structure, and Mr. *White* must seek for a new prop to declining *Babel*, and Scripture is not unable to decide Controversies of a later Date. Yet again : I will prove Jesus Christ was not of Mr. *White*'s mind, for he thought Scripture (yea even such parts of Scripture as were not written upon those Themes or controversies, nor designed against those errors) able to decide supervening Controversies. Thus he confutes the Pharisaical opinion about Divorce, from a Text well nigh as old as the Creation of the World, even the institution of marriage, *Matth. 9. 4, 5, 6.* So he confutes the error of the Sadducees against the resurrection, from a Scripture long before delivered, (and such an one too as seemed to have no respect at all to such an Heresy) *Mat. 22. 29, 30, 31, 32.* May it please this worthy Gentleman to give us leave without offence to prefer our Saviour's opinion before his. I am ashamed to spend time in confuting so senseless a cavil, but that the reputation of an Author sometimes makes Nonsense pass for an Argument. I need only advise the Reader to read over the New Testament, and (if he have either reason or conscience) it is impossible he should be of Mr. *Whites* mind. Did not the Apostles decide that controversie *Acts 15.* from ancient Scriptures, and from such places as seem as irrelative to the matter debated, as any which are urged by any considerable Protestant against the Popish errors ? And why then may we not tread in their steps ? why may not a

Protestant as well confute the opinion of Justification by works (in the Popish fence) from that Scripture, we conclude we are justified by Faith without the works of the Law, as *St. Paul* might and did confute the same doctrine (when held by the Jewes) from that passage of Davids, *Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven*, Rom. 4. If these words long before delivered, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, Deut. 6. 13. were sufficient to decide the controverſie between Christ and the Devil, to confute the opinion of Devil-worship, why may not the same words as urged by Christ be as sufficient to decide the controverſie between the Papists and us, to confute the opinion of Image-worship? But I am not at leisure to transcribe all the New Testament. I cannot think of *Mr. White* (as it is said of many Popish Doctors) that he never read over the bible, but I would desire him once more to read it, and to put on his spectacles, and then tell me if he be still of the same mind. If this will not do, let him reflect upon the Fathers, whether it was not the universal practice of the Fathers to confute later Heresies out of the Scripture: this they did either pertinently or solidly, (and then it may be done still,) or impertinently and fallaciously, (and then *Mr. White* makes them meer Juglers.) In a word, as upon supposition that *Aristotle* was authentick, and *authoritative*, it were no hard matter out of him to confute all the new opinions of the modern Philosophers: So the Scriptures being confessedly such, it may suffice for the confutation of later Heresies. Lastly, if all this will not serve turn, it is (to use his own words) a *shameless proposition*, to say the Scripture doth not speak of the matters now in Controversy, between us and the Papists; and whoever asserts it, either understands not what he saith, or must be presumed never to have read any of our Protestant Controvertists, who have fully confuted all the Popish errors and heresies from

from exprefs Scriptures, or (which is all one) from genuine consequences evidently deduced from them. Nor doth it matter at all to say, the Scripture speaks not of the controversies at large, ſince it is by all acknowledged, that every part and parcel of Scripture is Canonical and Authentical, and the Papifts make this the difference between the Divinity of the Scriptures and Conciliary Decrees; that theſe are Divine in the main Concluſion, but not in the premiſes or mediums, but the Scripture they ſay is Divine in all, every verſe, every word being Divine; and conſequently if but one verſe of Scripture ſpeak againſt an error, it doth as ſolidly (though not ſo fully) confute that error, as if a whole Book were written againſt it. For inſtance: that Text, *This is the true God*, if the ſenſe of the words be agreed, (and if they be not, it would do nothing, though an whole Epiſtle were written about it, and ſo far there is no difference) doth as ſubſtantiſhly confute the *Socinian* Heretie in that point, as a larger Diſcourſe upon it would do; and therefore Mr. *White's* argument is empty and ineffectual, and muſt go after its fellows. And ſo all their arguments of any note againſt the Scriptures being Rule or Judge of controversies are I hope ſufficiently answered, and the Proteſtants doctrine or Truth of Chriſt, *viz.* the Scripture, is a ſufficient rule or judge of controversies, ſtands like a Rock, at which their Waves are daſhed in pieces.

And now I ſhould come to the other part, by poſitive Scriptures and arguments to prove the Scriptures authority and ſufficiency, but this is fully done by many learned Pens, only becauſe our principal arguments for it are aſſaulted by the Adverſaries I now have to do with, I ſhall therefore conſider their pretenſions againſt the evidence of thoſe places alledged by us in defence of the authority and ſufficiency of the Scriptures; for I am forced by them (againſt my own deſire and inclination) to con-

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found these two heads, and treat of them together. I know there are several Texts rightly urged by the Protestants, and vainly cavilled by the Papists: but because the handling of this point was not my first nor is my main design at present, and one solid argument or convincing Scripture is as good as a thousand, and both parties are upon the matter willing their cause should stand or fall by the verdict of one place, as it doth, or doth not convincingly prove the sufficiency of the holy Scriptures, and because above all places the Romanists most eagerly combat this, I shall therefore more largely insist upon it, and clear up the force and evidence of it, notwithstanding all the clouds they cast before it.

The place is, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16. *From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.*

To ingenuous and dis-interested persons the very reading of these words is a sufficient confutation of the Popish opinion: but that you may see the Romanists have (if no conscience, yet) some wit, they are able to darken the clearest Texts, and to perplex what they cannot answer. Our arguments from this place are plain and cogent. 1. That which can make a man wise unto Salvation is sufficient for Salvation. 2. That which is sufficient for the conferring of all those things which are necessary to salvation, is sufficient for salvation: but so is the Scripture. For there are but two things necessary to salvation, viz. knowledge of the Truth & practice of righteousness and holiness: and for both these the Scripture is said to be sufficient. 3. That which is sufficient for a man of God or Minister, is much more sufficient for a private

Chri.



Christian: but so is the Scripture: *Ergo*

But let us see what our Adversaries pretend against this evident place, *Except. 1.* It is able indeed, but that is through faith, *E.* it is not of it self sufficient, saith our Captain. It speaks not of making Timothy a Christian by the Bible, (since it supposeth Timothy's being already made a Christian by Paul's institutions *viva voce*) but it speaks of the perfecting of his faith, not the first choice of it: as this faith is a belief of Christian verities delivered by Oral Tradition; saith Mr. Cressy *sect. 2. cap. 6.* And consonantly to him Mr. White thus glosseth upon the place: *The Scriptures will contribute to thy salvation, so that thou understand them according to the faith of Jesus Christ, which I have orally delivered unto thee.* Apology for Tradition, Sixteenth Encounter.

*Ans. 1.* The necessity of Faith is, no argument of the Scriptures insufficiency. The Scripture is sufficient, *i.e.* in *genere objecti*, in respect of the object, or Doctrine, or revelation, and yet Faith is necessary in *genere instrumenti*, as an instrument, (for it is plain enough, the faith he speaks of is the grace, not the Doctrine of Faith.) By this Argument Scripture and Tradition together were no perfect rule, for both will not make a man wise unto salvation otherwise than through faith.

*Ans. 2.* It is falsely supposed, and can never be proved, That the Faith here spoken of is the *fides qua creditur*, or the doctrine of Faith, not *fides qua creditur*, or the grace of Faith, and that by Faith are here intended Christian Verities, delivered by Oral Tradition from St. Paul, or the other Apostles: and this Supposition is the Basis of their Answer. The contrary sufficiently appears from diverse considerations. 1. This contradicts the Apostles scope, which apparently is to commend the Scriptures, as able to make wise to Salvation, &c. But this were no commendation at all to say, they together with such Christian verities are sufficient for salvation, for according to  
this

this argument it might be said of any one verse in all the Old Testament, what is here said of all the Scriptures; viz. That that Verse together with Faith, i.e. with the Christian verities delivered by Oral Tradition, is sufficient for Salvation, which no Papist will deny: and therefore that Answer is absurd.

2. Timothy's faith here supposed, is of the same kind with the Faith of his Mother and Grandmother, 2 Tim.

1. 5. *When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy Grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice.* Was the faith of his Grandmother to the Christian Verities delivered by Oral Tradition from the Apostles after she was dead?

3. It is not said, *The Scriptures are able—with the faith*, but *through the faith*, not *ad mixtum* but *ad mixtum*, which plainly shews, that this Faith is not another object distinct from the Scriptures, but an instrument to apply the Scriptures; especially if we consider a parallel place, Heb.

4. 2. *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith*, i. e. with the grace of Faith: for none can be so senseless, as to think they were damned for want of oral Tradition.

4. The Faith here spoken of is together with the Scriptures sufficient for salvation; and so is the grace of faith: But the Dogmatical belief of Christian Verities deliver'd by Tradition, together with the Scriptures, is not sufficient for Salvation, as the Papists confess: E. the grace of Faith is the thing here spoken of.

5. The Faith here spoken of is a thing distinct and totally differing from the Scriptures, and not at all co-incident with them. But the Christian Verities or Traditions delivered by the Apostles were not things so different, but co-incident with the Scripture, as evidently appears from Acts 26. 22. where St. Paul in terminis professeth, he said (Preached) *none other things, than those which the Prophets*  
and

and *Moses* did say should come. But I would have you to know, that the Church of *Rome* knew what *Paul* Preached better than himself: a plain evidence of their Infallibility.

Exc. 2. By this argument the Scriptures of the Old Testament ( for of them he speaks ) are sufficient for salvation, and so the New Testament is not necessary. So the Captain p. 29. and Cressly ubi suprà.

Ans. 1. It is very true, the Scriptures of the Old Testament were in those times sufficient for salvation: This appears from the place now cited *Acts* 26. 22. compared with *Acts* 20. 27. where *S. Paul* saith, he delivered the whole Counsel of God. Hence I argue: The whole counsel of God was delivered by *S. Paul*, and is sufficient for salvation: but all that *S. Paul* delivered was in *Moses* and in the Prophets, *Acts* 26. 22. If the Old Testament was deficient in any doctrine, it was that which the New Testament seems to supply, viz. the doctrine of Christ, and yet the Old Testament was sufficient to teach Christ; for it did both instruct men about the Person, and Office, and work of the Messias, (as our Divines do abundantly prove against the Jews, to whom I refer the Reader for the proof of it ) and also did sufficiently prove that Jesus was the Christ, as appears undeniably from *Acts* 18. 28. and consequently there was no defect, but a sufficiency ( for that time and condition of affairs ) even in the old Testament in things necessary to salvation.

A third Exception they take against our argument from this place is, That it speaks only of perfection after faith, but here is no question about the first choice of faith, much less is there any mention of convincing ( in foro contentioso ) about which is all our controversie. Thus Mr. *White's* Apology for Tradition, 16 Encounter.

Ans. Since then all our controversie is about that, whether Scriptures are so convincing, it will be worth our while to examine the point; for it is not my desire to catch  
at

at little advantages, but to attack the Adversary in his strongest Fort.

But before I come to the proof, let us inquire into the meaning of the Phrase; What it is for the Scripture to be convincing *in foro contentioso*, i. e. in way of disputation. I take it for granted, he is not so absurd as to expect that the Scripture should be so convincing, as actually to convince, and satisfy, and silence the most importunate and unreasonable Caviller. In that sense the clearest demonstration in the Mathematicks is not convincing: but without doubt Mr. *White* takes his Apology, and so his Treatise *de fide*, and Mr. *Rushworth's* Dialogues to be convincing Discourses, because though they do not actually convince the stubborn Heretick, yet they are *apta nata* to convince them, there is so much evidence in them, as may & ought to satisfy any understanding, unconcerned, inquisitive, and prudent adversary: and in this sense I do assert, that the Scriptures are convincing *in foro contentioso* (which is the great thing Mr. *White* sticks at:) I prove it thus.

1. The Scriptures make a man of God, i. e. the Minister (as they acknowledge) perfect, and thoroughly furnished to every work, but this is one of his chief works, to convince Gain-sayers, *Tit. 1. 9.* Ergo, Scripture furnisheth him with convincing arguments.

2. The Scripture is here expressly said to be profitable among other things for Conviction, *θεός διδάσκει*, first for doctrine, i. e. for the confirmation of Truths, then for conviction, (for so the Greek word more properly signifies than for reproof, which is mentioned in the next particular, for correction) or for refutation of errors. But surely Scripture were not profitable for conviction, if it be insufficient to attain that end, and be unconvincing: nay more, Scripture is not profitable for Doctrine, if it only beget conjectures and opinions, and doth not give solid

solid and satisfying evidence of its doctrines : and if it do evidently assert or prove a Truth, it must by consequence as evidently convince and confute the contrary error. For example: If any Scripture positively assert, that Christ is the true God, and equal with the Father, (as *de facto* it doth,) doth not the same Scripture sufficiently convince even *in foro contentioso* the Socinian Hereticks, who make Christ but a Creature, and inferior to the Father? Neither let him tell me of their cavils against such places, for so *Anaxagoras* did cavil against those that said Snow was white, (and gave a reason for it, saith *Tully*, because the water of which it had its rise was Black,) yet no man I think will deny that there is convincing evidence (even *in foro contentioso*) of its whiteness.

3. The Scripture was convincing formerly, and therefore it is so still, (for I do not know that it hath lost any of its vertue.) Christ proved himself to be the Messias out of the Scriptures in sundry places, and I think Mr. *Waite* will not deny, that all Christ's arguments were convincing. So Christ proves his Lordship and Divinity out of the Scriptures, and I think convincingly, (for his Adversaries were not able to answer him a word,) out of the Psalms. Read *Matth.* 22. 42, &c. When *Peter* and *Paul* disputed against the Jews out of the Scripture, and proved (as they did) out of the Scriptures, that Jesus whom they crucified was Lord and Christ; I would know, whether their Scripture-proofs were solid and convincing, or no: If they deny it, they make the Apostles deceivers, and wresters of the Scriptures; if they affirm, then Scripture is convincing. Once more we read *Act.* 18. 28. of *Apollos*, that he mightily convinced the Jews, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. I am ashamed to mention more arguments in so clear a cause: and yet we must believe these men against our senses, and reason, and conscience, that the Scriptures are not able to convince men

men in foro contentioso; and Mr. White (who sometimes writes as if he believed an everlasting state) dares hazard it upon such false and frivolous suppositions.

Excep. 4. *This word (All Scripture) must signifie either every Scripture, as the Original word πᾶς ought to be rendred, and then all Scripture save one Book is useless, or all the Scriptures that ever were, (and then we have them not,) or all that were then written, (and then all since written are superfluous,) or all that we now have.* Epist. pag. 29, 30.

Ans. The Text speaks not of every Scripture, but of all the Scriptures that then were. As for the word πᾶς, two things are evident enough.

1. That it may be taken collectively, and the use of the word will warrant it. I see the Captain is grown a Grecian, therefore I shall desire him to look only into two places which his Masters the Rhemists interpret *collective*, not *distributive*: Mat. 8. 32. πᾶσα ἀγέλη the whole herd, not every herd, and πᾶσα πόλις the whole City, v. 34.

2. That it must be so taken here, our Adversaries being judges, or else this confessed inconvenience will follow, That any one verse of the Scripture is profitable and sufficient to all these purposes: nor doth it at all follow, that all the rest are superfluous, because not precisely necessary. The Pentateuch alone was a sufficient Law for the Jews, yet none will say the Books of the Prophets concerning the explication or application of that Law were superfluous.

Except. 5. *He says not the Scriptures are sufficient, but only profitable.* Cressy.

Ans. 1. He saith they are profitable πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν, for every good work, and what is so, is undoubtedly sufficient.

2. He saith they are profitable, so far as to make one wise to salvation, and I think that is sufficient.

3. He

3. He saith they are profitable to the producing of all things necessary to salvation, which are acknowledged to be only two, Faith, and Life : and they are profitable to both of them. 1. For Doctrine, *i. e.* the demonstration of the Truth: 2. for conviction or reproof, *i. e.* the confutation of errors : 3. for correction, *i. e.* the reproof of sins : 4. for instruction in righteousness, or the discovery of Duties. And what is thus every way profitable, cannot with any colour be charged with insufficiency.

Excep. 6. *It is a clear case, the Apostle speaks of the benefits of Scripture, when explicated and applied by a preacher.*

*Answ.* 1. By this argument all these high and various *elogiums*, which are here so emphatically given to *all the Scripture*, do as truly belong to any one verse of Scripture. By this, those two words *Dio Ecclesie*, Tell the Church are able to make one wise to salvation, and furnished to every good work, &c. for so they are or may be (through God's blessing) if explicated and applied by an able Preacher. So those words, *Abraham begat Isaac*, are able to all these mentioned purposes, *viz.* if explicated and applied. So you see the Church of Rome is grown superlatively orthodox, for they who ere while would not allow all the Scripture to be sufficient, are now so abundantly satisfied in the point, that they allow any one verse in the Bible (not excluding *Toby went, and his dog followed him*) to be sufficient.

This, I hope, may suffice for the vindication of this Text, wherein I have been the larger, because it is most plain and impregnable to our purpose; and sufficient of it self to decide the whole controvesie. I shall not concern my self, or trouble the Reader with the vindication of other Texts to the same purpose, (which are many, and considerable, and with great facility defensible against all the Romish assaults) because to him that submits to the authority and self-evidencing light of the Text, that la-

beor is superfluous, and to Him whose Conscience will suffer His wit to quarrel against such forcible and clear expressions, and arguments, as this Text affords, it is frustaneous. And therefore upon the evidence that hath been delivered, I shall take the boldnesse to conclude, That not the Church, but the Scripture is the sufficient Rule and infallible Guide, by which we are to be regulated in all things pertaining to Faith or Godliness.

**FINIS.**





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